

ANGLO- SOVIET JOURNAL

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IMPRESSIONS OF TWO WEEKS IN MOSCOW AND LENINGRAD

An open letter to Irina Kadina,
member of the USSR-Great Britain Society, Moscow,
from Miles Malleon

Dear Irina Kadina,

Let me begin by saying that what follows are just my personal impressions of what I did and saw in an all-too-short visit ; and if you hadn't specially asked me to put them on paper I probably shouldn't have done so. But, as you *did* ask me, here they are, if only as a token of gratitude for all that you, and all of you from the House of Friendship, did to make our visit so successful ; and it has been a pleasure recalling those full and happy two weeks.

Where, then, to begin? In the car, driving from the airport towards the city. I was almost at once aware of the immense growth of Moscow since I was last there, eight years ago—all the new blocks of flats and veritable forests of cranes, stretching away into the distance. Long before we reached the heart of the city, I felt the pulse of it—the vigour, and optimism, and friendliness. As a matter of fact, when I was considering how best to express this I read in the *Daily Worker* here an account of Stravinsky's return. Let him speak for me ! A 'revelation', he called it, after his fifty-two years abroad. He found the people 'full of optimism and energy'. 'In this wonderful atmosphere I felt young.'

And with him, let mest art with the TU104. 'For me', said the great composer, 'this remarkable plane, which carried us on its great wings, seemed to me the symbol of the new Russia.' And like him, we had a smooth, comfortable and very rapid journey. Indeed, the pace of travel these days can be a bit bewildering. After only a little over three hours (in which the great plane didn't seem to be moving at all) I wasn't really prepared for the fact that in the crowded, busy airport everybody made the most friendly sounds at me which didn't make any sense ! And when I asked what seemed to me intelligent and necessary questions I was answered by head shakes, a shrug of the shoulders and large grins—in that order. However, I was soon picked up by an interpreter, and all was well.

But after so short a journey it did seem a very sudden change. Just as two weeks later, having had breakfast in Moscow, I walked into my local 'pub' (as we call them) to have a drink before lunch here, in London, and was almost taken aback when I wasn't answered in Russian ! However, they were all full of interest, and wanted to know what sort of a time we'd had, and what we'd seen and done, and I did my best to tell them.

Over here there is a very widespread interest to hear first-hand news of your country, but there is still far too much ignorance and misunderstanding. In this wretched and appallingly dangerous cold war there are far too many people who consider it their business (and, indeed, whose business it too often is) to make the most of the difficulties and mistakes of another society, and ignore or belittle its great achievements. Personal visits, at least, do something to counteract this ; and the more such exchanges there are the safer we shall all be. The real deterrent is not the obscene and utterly evil weapons of indiscriminate mass destruction, but the sympathy, understanding and friendliness between our peoples.

So after the miles of buildings and the wide landscape filled away to the horizon with busy cranes, what next? I'll choose a visit to the Palace of Pioneers in Leningrad. Last time I was in Russia, eight years ago, I had spent a whole

long day there, together with several English colleagues who were particularly interested in education. And over the years that day has remained one of my most vivid memories ; indeed, I still remember it as yesterday.

We saw, I remember, many groups of youngsters of all ages, being encouraged, helped, and taught in various subjects in which they were especially interested, and therefore quick at and enthusiastic about. In the first room we went into was a group of some twenty children ; designing and making puppets, writing their own plays for them, and learning to bring them to life. They were presided over by an elderly woman who was, we were told, one of your leading personalities in puppetry. But they were learning more than puppetry : they were peopling that room with characters of their own imagining. They were, as it were, pooling their young experiences of life, and becoming more aware of living people, and therefore the better able to understand them and get on with them. I don't think I exaggerate. Across eight years I can see and hear them talking, now, so intimately and eagerly and lovingly of their own creations.

It was my first glimpse into the many activities in that vast building (which had been the palace of one of the grand dukes before the revolution), and so it comes first to my mind. It wasn't in itself one of the most important sections, but it was so *alive* that it will remain with me as long as I live. We saw, on that same visit, groups of boys and girls drawing, painting, sculpturing ; a group of girls doing needlework ; pupils studying mines and mining, physics, astronomy, music, and much else. The term was in full swing, and we saw them all at work. Somehow 'work' doesn't seem the right word. Does a tree 'work' when it grows new branches? Or a flower 'work' when it puts out its buds and they begin to break into blooms of every shape and kind and colour? As infinitely varied as human beings—and I saw thousands of young human beings, growing and developing ; bringing to fruition the talents they were born with, under the guidance of experts, and so many of them becoming experts themselves. Thousands came there, several times a week, free and outside the ordinary educational system.

I have been recalling the impressions of a previous visit. But had not those impressions remained with me so vividly over the years I certainly shouldn't have asked to visit the Palace of Pioneers again. And this last visit confirmed and so deepened my impressions that I've now put them first.

On this occasion the term hadn't started. But we were welcomed by a charming lady who had to do with the direction of the whole place, and were then handed over to the care of three teenagers of about seventeen, two boys and a girl who all spoke very good English. We were first taken into a large room, entirely surrounded by presents which the young people of this Pioneer Palace had received from other young people all over the world. And not only from children—there was one from the American car millionaire Ford ! He seems to have been as surprised and impressed as I was !

Then to the geological section. I can see now a huge map of Russia, covering a very large wall, with all the minerals that are to be found all over the vast country. At the base of the map was a long row of little glass boxes containing specimens of these ; you pressed a switch above the box, and lights appeared on the map wherever those minerals were. The teenagers showed us, too, photographs of themselves on camping holidays—geological expeditions, on which groups go every year to see for themselves the problems and methods of extracting the various ores and metals. They took us into their planetarium, and, on a kind of cinema screen, we paid a short visit to the moon! They were, those three young people, as intelligent as they were well-mannered and charming. And as they showed us round they spoke with such (to me) moving pride of this remarkable place to which they belonged, and to which they were giving, and from which they were taking, so much.

Have I written too enthusiastically of this Pioneer Palace? I shall probably be told so, here, by those who have not seen it for themselves. But I don't think I have. They are only personal impressions, true, but deeply felt. And when one learns that there are such Pioneer Palaces or Houses in practically every city and town throughout the whole of Russia, this way of helping children—millions of them, and free of any charge—to make the most of themselves in any direction in which their own individual interests lie is surely a unique experiment in history. Its outcome must have a great influence not only on Russian society, but on the whole world.

I could couple this renewed experience in Leningrad with a visit to the new university in Moscow. We went there by Metro. Muscovites take their Metro for granted—but then they haven't travelled on any others! For my part, I'm always full of admiration at the spaciousness and cleanliness of the always differing stations, many of which have, for me at any rate, a real beauty. I can see the station now, on the bridge over the Moskva river.

In the university itself the term was only just beginning. We saw long queues of students lining up for their textbooks for the coming term. And as I looked at them and at hundreds of others hurrying along innumerable corridors, the newcomers to find their rooms, the seniors to find their friends of last term—young men and women from all over the Soviet Union, not only from the far-distant republics, but from quite a number of other countries as well; so different in build, colour, face, expression and general appearance, with such an infinite variety of individual characters behind their varied exteriors—I thought what a marvellous opportunity these years of such community life ahead gave them—if they made the most of it. And presumably, having managed to get there, most of them do. But I recall our guide and interpreter from the House of Friendship, himself at the university doing a post-graduate course in English history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and who had a lovely sense of humour, pointing out the queue for textbooks, and adding with a grin that there would be just such another queue towards the end of term, a few weeks before the examinations. So perhaps they don't all work, all the time, as hard as they might. But it's the same at my old university of Cambridge. There the majority work hard, very hard, perhaps too hard, missing something of the opportunity of meeting others of their own age and talking and discussing other things—anything—outside their curriculum of work. But at Cambridge the centuries-old colleges are scattered about the rather small market town, whereas in the great building on the Lenin Heights it is all much more concentrated and the immense opportunities of these years are more immediately obvious.

What next? Two visits to the Bolshoi. I can't keep away from it. The sheer size and magnificence of it always makes it, for me, an occasion. And two visits to the Puppet Theatre, and two shows that one couldn't see anywhere else in the world—plus an even greater pleasure than the performances themselves, meeting again Sergei Obraztsov himself, the genius of it all. I had met him in London when his puppets were a joy to millions of English people not only in the theatre but also on television. He has a genius for more than his puppets—for friendship and a real understanding of other countries. His love of London is both deep and penetrating. His special love is the London cockney—if his puppets ever became 'cockneys' I feel they would reveal cockneyism not only to others, but to cockneys themselves.

Apart from the Bolshoi and the Puppet Theatre, I have left the theatre proper to the last. Not at all because it made the least impression; but having been earning my living in the English theatre for the last fifty years it has a special interest for me.

I saw two plays at the Maly Theatre—incidentally from a very comfortable box, which I think was the managerial one, for which I was grateful and flattered,

and from which I had a good view not only of the stage but of the theatre itself, which I'd never been in before, and thought most handsome.

The plays were Chekhov's *Ivanov* and Tolstoy's *The Power of Darkness* ; and I saw what I expected—two productions done with a devotion to and knowledge of the plays, some very good acting, and at least three performances I shall never forget—feeling vaguely most of the time that there was a subtle difference between your style of acting and ours that I found difficult to explain even to myself. I remember saying to one of your leading critics, when I met him at the House of Friendship, that I felt that the Russian actors seemed to be able to act a part rather larger than life size and yet make it seem quite natural. After this conversation I was given a book—which I'm most happy to have—full of photographs, and the text in English about the Russian theatre ; and in it I came across a quotation from Mayakovsky himself that expressed in a short sentence exactly what I felt : ' The theatre is not a mirror. It is a magnifying glass.'

For us here it is more a mirror. An interesting difference. In both cases it can be in moments, or minutes, or even hours, of inspiration a revelation to a few or most of an audience—which for me is one of the things that make acting worth while !

As well as meeting one of your leading critics, two other distinguished theatre men were good enough to spare me quite a while of their time—the manager of the Maly Theatre and the manager of the Mayakovsky Theatre : Mikhail Tsaryov and Nikolai Okhlopkov. In very interesting talks with them, I explained what an exciting time we are going through in the story of the English theatre ; how, after the production of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* some years ago—because of the impact it made on both critics and public—there has been a real break-through by a new generation of dramatists. They are known as 'the angry young men', writing 'kitchen-sink' plays—this because they are angry at much that they see about them and are setting their plays, which express this anger, not in the drawing-rooms of our upper middle-class, but in the kitchens and living rooms of the lower middle and working classes.

This is, of course, by no means the first time we have had a very lively drama of social criticism. It began (not long after Stanislavsky and Chekhov were creating their own changes in your now world-famous Art Theatre) with Granville Barker at our small but historic Court Theatre.

Many of Bernard Shaw's plays were done there. Shaw attacked the things he didn't like by holding them up to ridicule. John Galsworthy wrote some fine and savagely critical plays such as *The Silver Box* and *Justice* (which had considerable contemporary influence) ; but he was himself a well-to-do man, and he set his plays for the most in the world of the well-to-do with which he was familiar. But these angry dramatists of today take as their themes various insincerities, inequalities and injustices which fill them—rightly I would say—with indignation, and fling a play at them ! Here and there a startled critic told them they were just 'dropping bricks' (as we say, 'making idiots of themselves') ; but several of their plays hit their mark, and hit hard. It is too soon to predict what is going to happen to this new trend. It largely depends, I would say, on whether these playwrights mature, write better plays (as plays) whatever form they take ; and after a period of destruction—understandable and indeed necessary—become more positive and creative. I think they will. They are beginning to.

I asked if there was any such new trend in your theatre ; and I gathered that, with a difference, there was ; the difference arising from the differences in our two societies.

I wish I could have seen the work of your new and younger writers for myself.

It would take time, one reason being that to see a new play of which one doesn't understand a word is of very little real use.

One would want to gather everything that one could about the play, in as much detail as possible, before one went to the theatre. And if I had, should I have seen acting more like our 'mirroring' rather than your 'magnifying'? I should so like to know! My friend Ralph Parker, with whom I was fortunate enough to spend an evening in his flat, and who while we were watching another very old friend of mine, Professor Bernal, talking on the television—all very like home—told me that there were a few of your new plays that had been translated into English. I'm trying my best to get hold of them, and if there are any here that I think would appeal to you I'll get them to you. An exchange of plays has a value to both our theatres.

For instance, many years ago there was a play called *Distant Point*, by a writer who was tragically killed in the siege of Leningrad, which was translated and performed quite a bit over here. It not only delighted many of us, but helped us to understand what was happening then in your country.

For the rest of my impressions: walking down Gorky Street; the Red Square, the unceasing queue to pay homage to Lenin (and as a foreigner being put to the head of the queue and making that unforgettable slow quiet walk through the Mausoleum); GUM, which wasn't there eight years ago; the colour in the cathedrals of the Kremlin (like walking into a Rembrandt canvas, I always feel); the exhibition at the Kazan Cathedral in Leningrad (fascinating—if I could have read Russian I should have spent all day there); the Nevsky Prospect; the Hermitage with the Picassos, Gauguins, Rembrandts and others; a civil wedding; the National Hotel and the Astoria Hotel; and the people...

And especially you, and Eero, and Vladimir Chubarov who sent you to us, and Natasha Karachan and Xenia Sipovskaya in Leningrad. To all of you, here from my flat in London, our thanks and greetings.

MILES MALLESON.

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LOOK AROUND !

A film script by
Sergei Obratzsov

Drawings by the author

SO that it will be quite clear to you, dear reader, I must first explain how this article began.

Several years ago the Moscow Documentary Film Studio asked me to help it in making a film about London. From 3,000 metres of beautifully shot colour film I had to select 800 metres, put the various episodes together (i.e. into a definite sequence), set the film to music, and finally write a commentary telling viewers what they were seeing. I knew that the power of fact in the cinema was very great, for there is nothing more convincing than the truth. But never before had I thought it would be so interesting to work on a documentary film.

After *London* I helped to make two more shorts : *The Chinese Puppet Theatre* and *A Story about Penguins*. And once again I got tremendous satisfaction from encountering the absolute truth of facts.

But in all these films I was organising and interpreting someone else's material. Everything had been wonderfully shot, but I had had nothing whatever to do with the process of shooting itself. Now I wanted to work on a documentary film from, so to speak, the very beginning. So I applied to make a film the theme of which would be love of nature and life all around man—that love that gives birth both to science and art. Working at the studio, I had become friendly with the director and cameraman, Isaac Grek, and when I put in my application I asked for him to be my colleague and comrade in the work. The application was pigeonholed for several years ; then suddenly it floated to the surface ! The studio gave Grek and me the job of making the film, and I wrote this scenario which you are now to read, if you haven't lost interest.



Shooting has started. There is already quite a length of finished film in round, silvery cans, but there is still much more to be taken. We wanted the film to be broad and varied ; so we wrote to the film makers in other countries asking them to send us anything they could for our picture. Very well made episodes have already been received from China, Rumania, Poland and Hungary, for which we are very grateful.

And that is all, I think, that I need to say before I begin to talk to the point.

THE first thing the audience will see are two motionless, attentive eyes, taking up the whole screen. Against the background of these eyes is writing—the title *Look Around!* and the credits. When the credits are finished the eyes come alive. They examine a test tube. That's a chemist. Another head is bent over formulæ—another scientist, this time a physicist. An easel and canvas—an artist is painting a still life. Hands holding a hammer and chisel—a sculptor is working on wood. A hand holds a fountain pen above some scored-out lines of verse—a poet. . . .

With the shots comes the commentator's voice : ' Why does a person become a great scientist, or painter, or sculptor, or poet ? Why ? What distinguishes these people ? Talent. And what is talent ? The ability to see what others have not seen. To hear what others have not heard, to understand what others have not understood. Where does this ability come from ? What is its source ? Its source is man's ability to marvel. To marvel at the shape of a leaf, the colour of the sky, the flight of a bee. To marvel and ask himself. " Why ? " And to want to answer that question. To answer with a chemical formula, a mathematical calculation, with colours on canvas, or lines of verse.'

Rain. People under umbrellas. What is there to marvel at here ? It's wet, that's all. But once there was a man who opened his window to the rain and rejoiced, and who bequeathed his joy to us. Do you remember ? ' I love the rain in early May, when the first thunder of spring, frisking and gambolling, rumbles in the blue sky. . . ' That was Tyutchev. Another man stopped in wonder at the rain. The sound became music to him, and he passed it on to us. That was Debussy.

The rain has ceased. There is a rainbow in the sky. People could not help marvelling at the rainbow because it was many-coloured. Here they are—the rainbows of Raphael, Poussin, Vrubel, Levitan.

' But is the crux of the matter the fact that the rainbow is beautiful ? ' a scientist asked. ' The marvellous thing is something else. The marvel is that the rainbow is sunlight broken up in drops of water.' Do you see the rainbow made on the tablecloth by an ordinary glass fork rest ? Well, what if we were to pass the light from white-hot iron through the prism instead of sunlight ? Or the light from sulphur ? Or from copper ? It transpires that each colour is a chemical element. That means it is possible to pass the light from any star through a prism and find out what it is composed of.





Here is a starry night. How many poets and scientists have been born this night! How many poems and romances! How many interesting discoveries!

The moon is the patron of lovers. And if you have the moon and the song of a nightingale, you will—whether you like it or not—fall in love. But we still do not know for whom the moon is more important—for singers or for physicists. The eyes that are trained on it! The telescopes, the spectroscopes, the tele-lenses, the cine-cameras! Each crater, each valley, each fissure is known, and all have been named.

But what a pity that it is impossible to see the moon from behind—she never turns her back to us. That means that a rocket must be dispatched. Let it fly around the moon and photograph her, and then send the photographs back to us by radio. And here is the other side of the moon. New craters, new mountains, new valleys. And new names.

Lovers don't need the astronomical moon, only the ordinary one. The moon that lights up the hands, the eyes, the lips. How do we know who these two are? Perhaps he is an artist and she an astronomer. At the moment both are poets. For the poet is not he who knows how to select rhymes, but he who sees with the heart.

A star has fallen. That has always caused people to wonder. But when a rock falls from a mountain there's nothing wonderful about that, is there? It's heavy! Where else could it go? Certainly not upwards! Down, of course. A boy has fallen. That, too, is not surprising: he stumbled and fell. An acorn fell. And an apple—and then suddenly a man picked it up and realised something. *Eureka!* He had made a discovery. He discovered the law of gravity, the law of terrestrial gravity. That was Newton.

Now Soviet people have conquered terrestrial gravity. Major Titov wrote something as he sat in the cabin of his fantastic space ship, and then put the pencil on the air. The pencil did not fall, though it wasn't hung from anything. Nor did drops of jelly fall. He had to collect them on a cork so that they wouldn't hover about in front of his eyes.

But it's not always necessary to fly to heaven to see the marvellous. Everything on our sinful earth is also marvellous. Particularly since dreams of heaven were born on earth!

Here is the backwater of a river. This quiet water has travelled an enormous distance, all the way from the Valdai Hills. It has wandered all over Russia. It joined up with the Oka, the Belaya, the

Kama, and has spread in dozens of branches to spill into the Caspian Sea. This is the delta of the Volga. Let us hold our breath. The marvel will come to us of itself. There it floats—a black duck with a bald patch on its head. A coot ! And there is an ordinary quacking mallard drake. And here is his old love, now the mother of his offspring. The father takes no part in their upbringing. Unfortunately, that also happens sometimes among humans. . .

Hunters, don't shoot ! First of all, it's the close season ; secondly this is a game preserve. And thirdly, how much pleasanter it is to take sight with a Zorka or a FED, or a Kiev, instead of with a rifle. Here is the wonderful picture you would get. See it ?

And now look back. Aren't they marvellous ? Herons. If there were less thoughtless shooting, herons would make friends with us as storks do. What wonderful wings they have ! How many thousands of years men have marvelled at the flight of birds ! And dreamed. And flown in their sleep, and in their stories and legends.

More than 400 years ago Leonardo da Vinci, great artist and great scientist, examined the wings of birds and drew plans for future flying machines. The real scientist, surely, is not he who knows a great deal, but he who foresees knowledge. Who sees ahead.

Three hundred years ago a simple Russian peasant made himself wings of mica and chamois. He knew nothing of Leonardo, but like him he envied the birds and dreamed of the skies. Leonardo da Vinci's flying machine never got built. And if it had it would not have flown. Nor did mica wings or chamois wings keep man up in the air. He fell and was flogged for his temerity. But both dreamers triumphed.

Just see how the bird, created by man, soars ! The birdman—he has outstripped the dream, outstripped the arrow, outstripped the sound of his own flight.

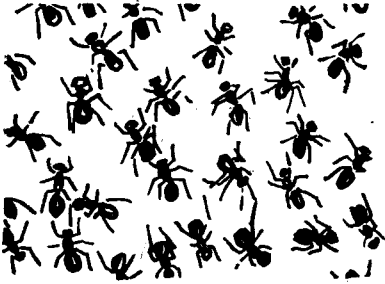
Once more you and I have reached up into the sky ! Ah well, we'll have to come down to earth once more. A little while ago I asked you to look back, and you saw a heron. Now let's look down. What's that there in the water ? A fish, an enormous fish, coming in to spawn. Look how many there are ! They're sturgeon. If you've ever had the good fortune to see them spawning you'll never forget it. It's a great poem of life, a silent hymn to nature.

And what is this ? It's a spawning fish, but in an aquarium. The roe resemble tiny glass beads. Watch how the parent fish care for the roe. These



fish have real friends : Moscow children, who've done everything possible to enable them to begin spawning. They've seen to the temperature of the water, to the air and the filter. I can't say whether these youngsters will become ichthyologists, or doctors, or poets, but it's indisputable that they are talented—they know how to marvel.

Here we have a girl in dark glasses, sunbathing on a tree stump in a summer colony near Moscow. Do you know what the most astonishing thing about her is ? The fact that nothing amazes her. She thinks she loves nature and the sun, but it's not true. Take a look at nature through her glasses. It's grey and drab. All she needs the sun for is for the beauty of her skin. But if she had spent this time by this same stump, under the same sun, with her glasses off, what a lot of marvellous things she would have seen, no more than a yard away, all around her ! That is, of course, if her sense of astonishment hasn't completely atrophied.



On a blade of grass a fly sits washing itself. Isn't that astonishing ? Just like a human being. A couple of ants are dragging a dead bumble-bee along. That too is astonishing, for the bumble-bee is twenty times as heavy as the ants. It's the same as two humans hauling a load of three tons.

The holiday-maker hasn't seen any of this. She's long since departed. The stump is abandoned. That is why we've been able to come here with a film camera and take pictures of what was to be found within a few feet radius of the sunbathing girl.

Here is a grasshopper. I don't know whether she marvelled at it, or whether its chirping delighted her. Probably not. But here we have a Chinese artist who has painted a grasshopper in a cage. Why ? Chinese youngsters had caught a grasshopper and put it in a cage just like the one the artist painted. Why ? Here is why. Look ! A lorry is coming along a dusty, sun-baked road. In the cabin is the driver, and before him is a little cage, with a grasshopper. This driver truly knows how to love nature and to marvel at her. In the cage he's caught the merry sound of summer, so that it can transform his dusty cabin into a green meadow with the freshness of a summer morning.

Right by the tree stump is a frog. Our holiday-maker, of course, would have been terrified of it, and would have said 'Ugh ! what an ugly thing . . . !' And what would have happened if her younger brother had come running up to her with a bombina-frog in his hand, to show his sister what a wonderfully beautiful belly it had ? Orange with black markings ! His sister would probably

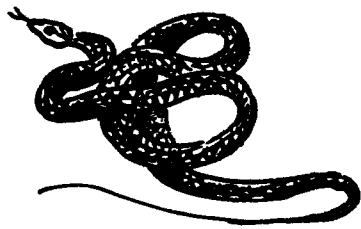
have said 'Drop it this minute ! That's a toad ; you'll get warts. What a horrible thing !'

She has finished school, but she's still illiterate. Doubly illiterate. For in the first place she calls a frog a toad ; and secondly she slanders it with lies. Warts have never been caused by toads and never can be. Look, I'm holding one in my hand, but I've got no warts ; and I won't get any. She should be ashamed to call a toad a horrible thing since it's one of the most useful of animals. The girl probably ate strawberries this morning, without knowing that the toad had guarded the strawberry beds all night, guarded them against slugs and harmful insects. She should thank the toad instead of saying ' Ugh ! Horror !'



Two grass snakes are crossing the path. We've disturbed them : they were sleeping under a bush. It's just as well the girl with the sun-glasses didn't see them : at best she'd have begun to scream ; at worst she'd have struck them with a stick. Perhaps that's what happened, for here is a dead snake. It was killed either by someone who was simply bad-tempered or by somebody as ignorant as the girl, who mistook the grass snake for an adder. How often I've heard people say ' You know, a snake nearly stung me. I even saw its sting !' Take your glasses off, my dear, and look closely. Don't be afraid. I'm holding the snake in my hands. Do you see ? It's a grass snake. How do I know ? Why, because it has yellow cheeks. An adder's head is completely black.

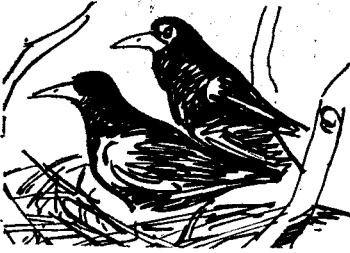
And this is not a sting. Snakes don't have stings. They don't sting—they bite. And this is not a sting but a tongue. They use their tongues to feel with. Insects have little whiskers for this ; and mice, too, and cats, and many other animals. Only fops have whiskers as an adornment ; ants and moles have them for a purpose. So there's no need to shriek at the sight of a snake's tongue, and no need to be afraid. But there is plenty to marvel at.



Just watch how the grass snake crawls, the grace and beauty of its movements. Only by understanding the beauty of the snake's movements could the Chinese people have created their wonderful dragon dance.

What a pity that girl was blind in the midst of beauty, poverty-stricken in the midst of wealth.

All right ! Perhaps if she didn't see anything she heard something ? Her ears must have been open. The cuckoo—she must have heard the cuckoo. And perhaps was even upset because it cuckooed only forty-two times instead of a hundred. Has she ever seen a cuckoo ? It's very improbable that she has. Does she know that it is the male bird that



sings, just as it is the male of the finch and chiffchaff that sing ? I shouldn't think she does. What a pity. Surely she must want to know what sort of a bird it is that sings every day in the tree. It's a finch. And who is this tinkler ? A blue-tit. And what is that—a short whistle, as if calling somebody, and then suddenly a sharp hissing sound, like a cat spitting, or a saw being pulled across cardboard ? Are they different birds ? No—it's the same bird. Hide behind a bush or tree, but don't forget to take your glasses off ! Look, an oriole ! What an amazing beauty—orange-gold, with black wings.

Now, whose voice is this ? The bluethroat. And this ? The nightingale. Nights near Moscow filled with the song of nightingales : they sing by the very roadside ; they're not even afraid of car headlights. So many nightingales ! What a pity we've no time to count them—there must be at least fifteen, if not twenty, voices intermingling.

But why are nightingale trills being heard in a shop ? First-rate, too ! Someone is buying a recording of bird calls. Buy one, too—you'll find it jollier walking in the woods ; you'll recognise the birds from their calls. And the birds will become your friends and acquaintances.

Here is the man who collected the bird calls setting up his microphone to record a new song. He's located them ; a bunting is singing there in the birch tree ; and in that bush he hears a chiffchaff. Later they will sing at home—on a gramophone record.

Do you hear it ? However, that's not a recording now. It's a real chiffchaff. This room belongs to a worker, a fitter. He hasn't many weeks holiday that he can spend in the woods near Klin, where his relatives live, so he's borrowed nature from the forest.

Just look ! So many birdcages—two goldfinches, a pine-finch, a crossbill, a chiffchaff and a canary. And on the window-sill there's a geranium in a flower-pot.

Whoever invented the idea that the geranium, the guitar and a canary are the hallmarks of the *petit bourgeois* ? Do you know who ? The aristocrats. They had their harpsichords, palms and parrots. No, the geranium, the guitar and the canary are not the mark of the *petit bourgeois* ; they are the poetry of the workers' settlements. Countless illegal May Day gatherings before the Revolution were graced by the guitar. It has created so many wonderful workers' songs. And how much pleasure the geranium and the canary have brought people ! To borrow beauty from nature—that is poetic passion ; how could it be called *petit bourgeois* ?

But what is this ? It is present-day Moscow. What is going on ? A competition for the best canary song. There we have the jury. The canary's owner puts the cage on the table ; if the canary does not sing within the next ten minutes it is disqualified. Upsetting, of course. But it doesn't often happen. Usually the song rings out within the first few seconds. Now we must follow to see how many parts this song has, and what purity of sound.

I asked one of the judges : ' Why hasn't this canary been given a mark ? Doesn't it sing ? The judge was even angry. ' Of course it sings, but what ? A Chalyapin is one thing, a village deacon's another.' The judge was right, as I realised when I heard the winner sing.

What good are canaries and pigeons and swans to man ? Why were Muscovites so overjoyed when a nightingale nested in Sverdlov Square ? What makes it so nice to feed a quite tame squirrel in a city park ? What makes a little boy beg : ' Mummy, I want a kitten ' ?

Do you know why ? Because for tens of thousands of years man dwelt among the rocks and fields and forests surrounded by animals and birds. And now, when he finds himself in the city all on his own, he finds it simply intolerable. So he calls to nature—to the trees, the flowers, the birds and the animals. He calls them to him, into the town, into the streets, the squares, the courtyards, into the house, into his room. Is this atavism ? An obsolescent conditional reflex ? No, it's an organic desire to feel oneself part of the immense and beautiful whole, the name of which is life.

Yes, he is man ; and the bird is not his sister, nor the puppy his brother. Nevertheless they are sisters and brothers in life, in the sky, on the earth. Remember what Esenin said : ' . . . animals, as our younger brothers, he never struck on the head.' But, you may say, what won't poets think up ? But that wasn't thought up by the poet ; it was thought up by the people.

Who called the vixen little sister ? Who calls the calf daughter ? Who calls a pet pigeon lovey-dovey ? Who calls the bold an eagle ? Who calls a girl a swallow ?

How many years has man called the dog his friend ? And, of course, it's a fact ; of all the animals the dog is man's best friend. The dog brings him food. The dog guards his herds. The dog goes into harness. The dog gives man its blood, its body, its heart, so that he can learn to protect himself against diseases. The dog was the first to go into space ; and the dog died, so that man should not.



Here is the memorial to a dog put up by that great physiologist Pavlov. Yuri Gagarin has proposed that a memorial be erected to the dog Laika, and I am confident that one will be.

See how beautiful the dogs are at the All-Union Dog Show: setters; European sheepdogs; Ukrainian sheepdogs; Russian borzois. This beautiful doberman is called Jim, just like Kachalov's dog, immortalised by Yesenin. Do you remember? 'Come, Jim, give me your paw for luck. Such a paw I've never seen. Let you and I bay at the moon in calm, silent weather . . .' Look! He's given his paw, like the other Jim. Thank you! You, too, would probably like to bay at the moon. Go ahead! I'd willingly keep you company, but I haven't time. I've got to get on with this film.

And these funny little dogs, what are they good for? They can't hunt, they can't act as guards. But their mistresses, these two old ladies, don't keep them for mercenary reasons—simply for friendship. We've no right to condemn them for that.

A boy is having an ice cream, and he's giving a puppy some too. Don't you experts in pedigree dogs go scorning the puppy because he's a mongrel. There are quite a few mongrels among the most famous and finest dogs in the world, dogs that have done so much good for man. Recall Chekhov's Kashtanka. How many kind, and very necessary, tears have been shed by millions of children as they read about the friendship between the boy and the mongrel dog! Or think of Turgenev's Mumu. What great tragedy for the serf-bound man was revealed in Gerasim's love for this pup.

There are no dogs in the world more famous than the space dogs Laika, Belka, Strelka and Little Star—all mongrels. Make friends with your mongrel, lad, make friends! Nothing but good can come of such friendship.

Elks. They would have disappeared long ago if it weren't for the law putting an end to the slaughter of these beautiful animals. The elk can also be an assistant to man—it can haul and plough.

Saigas. A few more years, and they might have disappeared from the face of the earth. Soviet people have taken them under their protection. Now there are thousands. Here is a saiga kid. He's hugging the ground, imagining he can't be seen. He doesn't know that film cameras have telelenses. Nevertheless, something has startled him. And startled the others. How they tear across the steppe, all covered in feather grass! Like a sand storm!

These are aurochs, the famous aurochs of the



Belovezh Forest Game Preserve. These are scions of the bulls that cavemen drew on the rock walls of their dwellings. The aurochs are protected by law and preserved by the care taken of them by zoologists, veterinary surgeons and game wardens.

These forests are also protected by law. For thousands of years men thoughtlessly cut down trees, and turned vast expanses into desolate spaces. Ask the writer Leonid Leonov. He will tell you about the world tragedy of the forests. This tragedy can be halted, and can be remedied. Trees must be planted, and planted wherever possible.

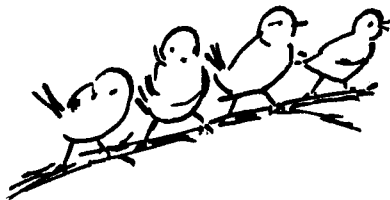
What maimed that sapling ? Who was it ? I don't know his name, but I know he's got no future ! He's wretched and ungifted. He lacks all ambition. To him this is not a tree of the future with a beautiful crown, but simply a stick.

This is where people have sat. No doubt they thought they had been 'communing with nature'. Nothing of the sort ! They haven't the first thing in common with nature ; otherwise how could they have defiled everything so around them ? Paper, empty tins, broken bottles. What a pity I don't know their names, for I wouldn't fail to list the whole lot of them.

It's just as well they didn't notice the nest in that nearby bush, or else they would probably have plundered it. And a most marvellous and triumphant event is taking place in it ; the chicks are hatching out, new citizens of the happy forest. Ah ! but the nest didn't meet their eyes. Another one, though, only a couple of yards away, did. Here is a chick that's been killed. It already had its feathers ; soon it would have been able to fly. But it never had the chance. Oh, what a pity I don't know who did this ! And here is an elk that's been killed. Some people who learned that we were making a nature film told us about the killing. A cameraman visited the spot and took a picture. A week later we learned that the person who had committed the crime had been discovered. He is to stand trial. Here he is. On your feet ! Here comes the court.

Here is a dead fish in the water—and another, and another. Actually, this, too, is murder. Deliberate murder. A factory is discharging its poisonous waste into the river. The director of the factory has asked not to be named ; he has said that this scandalous practice will now stop. We shall see. But this is not simply a scandalous practice—it's a crime.

A factory chimney. Smoke and grime. But not the ordinary variety. It contains all kinds of poisonous admixtures. It has covered the streets,





the grass, the trees. It penetrates one's ears and nose and mouth, and gets into the lungs. The director of the factory justifies himself ; he pays a fine every year for this outrage—200,000 roubles. Perfectly true—but the money's not his ; it belongs to the state. So what is happening is that the state is paying itself a fine ! But if the director himself were fined—if only 200 roubles—there'd be no delay then in installing soot arresters.

These are tulips in the gardens and parks of Moscow. They have been created by horticultural scientists. They've been created by poets. What for? What practical good do we get from flowers? None—none except beauty.

But beauty is useful ! Most useful. Man cannot live without it. Except perhaps a beggar in spirit.

Man transforms the beauty and wonder of nature into the beauty and wonder of art, the beauty of life. Take a Ukrainian stove. An ordinary peasant woman has painted the pattern around it. Could these beautiful flowers have bloomed had men not loved and marvelled at the flowers that grow in the woods, in the fields, in gardens ? A field of poppies—and here are poppies on a girl's skirt. And here, too, are flowers by Korovin, Kinchalovsky, Renoir, Gauguin, and Saryan.

Look again. Here we have another stump. An ordinary stump. But look carefully. It seems to resemble an old man. Something that is called creation has taken place. A work of nature has been transformed into a work of art. The sculptor Konenkov saw a swan in this snag, and the snag became something living and alive. A Chinese folk sculptor has turned this root into an ox. A Russian peasant has turned these two cones into goblins. And Bulgarian girls make dolls out of corncobs. That, too, is art. It is real art, only here we have its cradle, its seed. The pinnacle is in the works of the great masters.

Children are sitting on a hillside staring at a distant wood. On their backs are sacks. Inside the sacks are salt, matches, cereals, tinned food and bread—food for two days. They long to discover what is there, beyond the distant wood. Some say there is a warm spring there, and that ammonites are to be found in the river bluff. These youngsters are dreamers—dreamers and poets. And this means that their trip will last not two days, but twenty years !

Let's have a look at their faces.

Bon voyage, children !

Ogonyok, 1962, No 1. Abridged.

MOSCOW IN 1962

W. W. Begley

In this article the author, an architect who is a member of the London County Council and Vice-Chairman of its New and Expanded Towns Committee, gives an account of a week he spent as a tourist in Moscow in the summer of 1962.

EACH year since 1959 I have visited Moscow, and have been able to watch the giant strides being made towards the great city of the future where comfort, convenience and happiness will be blended in a town-planners' dream.

My first visit was made with considerable trepidation and in the expectation of seeing new buildings in a semi-ruinous condition, with—so I had been assured—at least twenty-five per cent of the balconies collapsing. This proved to be nonsense ; but, as might be expected in a country with only a handful of trained craftsmen and an urgent and colossal building programme, there were defects—such as, for example, the peeling off of ceramic facings of otherwise satisfactory blocks of flats, due to failure to appreciate the differing rates of settlement of brick and tile. In the main the defects were of this kind, more obvious than real.

Each year has brought significant advances, until now—as Mr. Khrushchov recently remarked—the USSR has a labour force capable of tackling any problem. This is evident on every hand, and illustrated statistically by the completion of a new flat every fourteen and a half seconds.

My 1962 visit was of particular importance to me, as I was entrusted by the Mayor of Lambeth with a letter relating to the 'twinning' of that borough with its Moscow counterpart, Moskvoretsky District—a project which has now reached fruition.

As a result of arrangements made by the SCR, I was met at the airport not only by the Intourist representative, but also by Mr. V. Chubarov, Secretary-General of the USSR—Great Britain Society, who took me in his car to the Metropole Hotel. Here I was installed in a suite with my own bath, shower and toilet (all of which, contrary to the much publicised idea, worked efficiently). My windows overlooked Sverdlov Square, with a view extending from the Kremlin to the Bolshoi Theatre.

The next day, Sunday, there was brilliant warm sunshine, typical of the whole week. I spent the morning and afternoon wandering about the city and sitting in the public gardens. In the evening I wanted to go to one of the theatres, but the Intourist Service Bureau reported 'No seats'. Then I suggested the new Rossiya Cinema on Pushkin Square, but this, too, proved to be booked up. However, the Bureau telephoned the administrator of the cinema and gave me a letter to him, which I duly presented—rather guiltily, in view of the long queue waiting in the hope of tickets being returned. To my astonishment I was provided with a special armchair, placed in the middle of the wide central aisle. The cinema, which was opened in 1961, is equipped with a wide screen and a spacious stage, and seats some 2,500 people under perfect conditions.

On the Monday I was informed that the Moscow City Council had arranged for me to meet Mr. A. Vertogradov, the deputy chairman of the Council responsible for its relations with cities abroad, and representative city officers on the next day. On the Wednesday I was to meet Mr. V. Chilikin, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Moskvoretsky District ; and on the Thursday I was to have an interview with Mr. M. Posokhin, the city architect, and officers

of the Union of Architects. In the meantime the Council sent me a car, with a chauffeur and an English language teacher as an interpreter, and with *carte blanche* to visit anywhere in the city.

I devoted the day to photographing new buildings, such as the amazing Palace of Pioneers (then not yet quite complete), housing, shops, schools and, not least, parks, gardens and replanted mature trees.

On Tuesday morning another interpreter—this time a ‘pure mathematician’—arrived to take me to the City Hall, where I discussed with Mr. Vertogradov and others the progress that had been made during the year. Among those present was the chairman of the Chaikovsky Concert Hall, who disappeared for a few moments and then returned with two tickets for a Bach organ recital being given that evening.

Following this interview, Mr. Sergeev, an architect who spoke English, took charge, and we set off on an extensive tour of Moscow, beginning with the Leningrad Highway, where I photographed new buildings, combined subways and bus shelters, and new Metro stations. Then we turned off in a westerly direction to see a new standard type cinema for housing estates, seating 600 ; and park buildings and cafes built in stainless steel and glass and roofed on the hyperbolic principle. This took us through a new district of the city, where thousands of flats are in course of construction—with the shops, schools and amenities of a ‘neighbourhood’—and finally to Khimki, where the development of canals and a huge fresh-water lake has made Moscow a ‘Port of Five Seas’, with frequent passenger sailings to many distant places. Here I was lucky enough to be able to photograph a 100-seater hydrofoil, which can cruise at fifty miles an hour and create no wash.

Wednesday was perhaps the most important day, as it had been set aside for my visit to Moskvoretsky District. Mr. Chilikin, the ‘Mayor’, received me at the Town Hall with open arms. We sat down round a table with some of the chairmen of the District’s fourteen standing committees, or commissions as they call them, and discussed the problems and possibilities of ‘twinning’ with Lambeth. Both have the seat of government and the river to the north ; the Houses of Parliament and the Thames are paralleled by the Kremlin and the River Moskva. Both extend to the southern boundary of the city in a narrow strip, and Moskvoretsky has two radial roads meeting in the north of the District, very similar indeed to the Brixton and Clapham Roads in Lambeth. The boundaries of Moskvoretsky were redrawn in the reorganisation of Moscow City government a couple of years ago, and the Town Hall is actually outside the District, but—strangely enough—the site chosen for a new Town Hall is in relatively the same position in the District as that of Lambeth. Moskvoretsky also has a large park situated similarly to Lambeth’s Brockwell Park. The District has an immense housing problem, but it is being tackled in a great building drive. In 1961 over 8,000 flats were completed in Moskvoretsky District alone (as compared with 3,867 built by the LCC for the whole of the County of London).

Mr. Chilikin personally escorted me on a round of visits, the first being to the Vladimir Ilyich Electrical Engineering Works, an old undertaking now enormously expanded and producing a wide variety of products, including a very workmanlike washing machine selling at a reasonable price.

We then visited School No. 14, where I was greeted in English by children aged nine to ten. All the children in this school learn English, and they gave me a remarkably good programme of English songs and recitations. The children flocked around me asking questions, and inviting me to see their theatre, *Snowdrop*. This was a great surprise—all the scenery is painted by the children and it was really quite professional. They also make excellent furniture in the school workshops.

Our next stop was Boarding School No. 12, with an enrolment of 280 children. A surprising feature of this school was that the parents may have the children home at night or at weekends if they wish, and take an actual part in the running of the school, being free to enter at any time.

Mr. Chilikin had mentioned that there would be a full meeting of the Moskvoretsky Soviet (Council) at two o'clock ; and on my asking if I could attend he cordially agreed, and led me on to the platform to be greeted by the 250 members (deputies) of the Council. At the opening of the session he read out the letter I had brought from the Mayor of Lambeth, which was received with loud applause and unanimous approval. There was very little difference in procedure between this meeting of a District Soviet and a borough council. On this occasion the reports of the fourteen standing commissions were presented, criticised and passed. Some of the comments were very much to the point, but there was general and very real satisfaction that another stage in the seven-year plan had been over-fulfilled.

Another surprise awaited me in the evening. I had heard of the new Palace of Congresses in the Kremlin, but I had not realised that it is also a fully equipped theatre and opera house, and is used in that way. The Service Bureau had obtained a ticket for a performance there by the Bolshoi Theatre company of Verdi's *Otello*, and I found myself in what must be the largest and most sumptuous theatre in the world. Altogether this was a memorable day.

The following day, Thursday, I was received by the Moscow city architect, and we discussed a proposed exhibition in London on the restoration of historic buildings and works of art in the USSR, prior to further consultations with the Secretariat of the Union of Architects on the same subject. Unfortunately, the first secretary of the union and former city architect of Moscow, Mr. Alexander Vlasov, had died, and the staff of the Union were fully occupied making arrangements for the public funeral. Nevertheless, I was able to discuss the project with Mr. Butuzov and several other architects.

My last day in Moscow was a very busy one. The Mayor of Moskvoretsky was anxious to show me more of his District, and we started off on another tour at 9.30 a.m., visiting a kindergarten and a technical school, both of great interest. At the kindergarten the children learn English, and showed an astonishing command of the language after one year. They all sang 'The more we are together' for me, and I joined in.

In the afternoon I had a meeting with Mr. P. P. Volkov, the head of the Parks and Forests Department of Moscow City Council, an old friend of several years' standing. He is doing great work : in the past ten years he has planted more than 3,000,000 trees in the city. The planting is now going on at the rate of about 400,000 trees a year, of which a tenth are mature trees of up to fifty years' growth. This year Mr. Volkov took me out to his department's nurseries, where he proudly showed me some of the 6,000,000 potted flowering plants being prepared for sale to Muscovites for indoor enjoyment in the winter. Although he had stepped up output by 1,000,000 plants this year, he still cannot, he assured me, keep pace with the demand.

From the nurseries I had to return direct to my hotel and then go on to the airport ; and so ended a most interesting visit. There were moments when I was deeply moved—by the schoolchildren flocking round me, holding my hands and helping me up the stairs to see their handiwork ; by the quiet confidence of all the people I met in the rapid progress of the national economy towards a better life for all ; by the friendliness so widely extended to me, shown not least by my English-speaking chauffeur ; by the first Russian I dined with—by chance—in the Metropole Hotel on my first evening, who pinned a peace badge on my lapel ; and by the farewell words at the airport—'Goodbye. We must all work for peace.'

Не жалею, не зову, не плачу,
Все пройдет, как с белых яблонь дым.
Увяданья золотом охваченный,
Я не буду больше молодым.

Ты теперь не так уж будешь биться,
Сердце, тронутое холодком,
И страна березового ситца
Не заманит шлаться босиком.

Дух бродяжий! ты все реже, реже
Расшевеливаешь пламень уст.
О моя утраченная свежесть,
Буйство глаз и половодье чувств!

Я теперь скупее стал в желаньях,
Жизнь моя, иль ты приснилась мне?
Словно я весенней гулкой ранью
Проскакал на розовом коне.

Все мы, все мы в этом мире тленны,
Тихо льется с кленов листьев медь...
Будь же ты вовек благословенно,
Что пришло процвести и умереть.

1922



До свиданья, друг мой, до свиданья,
Милый мой, ты у меня в груди.
Предназначенное расставанье
Обещает встречу впереди.

До свиданья, друг мой, без руки и слова,
Не грусти и не печаль бровей,—
В этой жизни умирать не ново,
Но и жить, конечно, не новей.

1925

TWO POEMS BY S. A. YESENIN

I do not regret, nor cry, nor clamour.
All will pass like apple-bloom away.
Like this all-embracing golden glamour
I shall fade, no longer young and gay.

Soon no more in toil will you be tiring
Heart of mine, now touched with early cold.
Silver-birch land, shady past desiring,
Ne'er again I'll walk barefoot and bold.

Restless spirit ! Rarely and more rarely
Will you bring to burning lips hot blood.
Freshness of my youth, I miss you dearly,
Questing vision, feelings at the flood !

Now I hoard my wishes, mean and surly,
Do I dream, O life, your swift-run course?
Like spring echoes in the morning early
Off I sped upon my rose-winged horse.

Each and all upon this earth is fleeting,
Copper maple-leaves drift softly by
Rest content, eternal blessing meeting,
That you learned to blossom, and to die.

1922



So fare thee well, a long farewell, my friend.
My dearest one, you live within my breast.
This predetermined parting at the end
Gives promise of one meeting more, at least.

So fare thee well, my friend, without a word, a hand,
And do not grieve for me, with sorrowing brow,—
In this life dying is not new, nor grand,
But living, surely, is no newer now.

1925

Translated by Walter C. May.

9 МАЯ 1945

О них когда-то горевал поэт:
Они друг друга долго ожидали,
А встретившись, друг друга не узнали
На небесах, где горя больше нет.
Но не в раю, на том земном просторе,
Где шаг ступи — и горе, горе, горе,
Я ждал ее, как можно ждать любя,
Я знал ее, как можно звать себя,
Я звал ее в крови, в грязи, в печали.
И час настал — закончилась война.
Я шел домой. Навстречу шла она.
И мы друг друга не узнали.

1945



Чужое горе — оно как овод,
Ты отмахнешься, и сядет снова,
Захочешь выйти, а выйти поздно,
Оно — горячий и мокрый воздух,
И как ни дышишь, все так же душно,
Оно не слышит, оно — кликуша,
Оно приходит и ночью поет,
А как утешить — оно чужое.

1945

TWO POEMS BY ILYA EHRENBURG

MAY 9, 1945

A poet once lamented o'er those twain
Who loved and waited long, could not forget,
But did not know each other, having met
In Paradise, where there is no more pain.
In this wide world today—not Heaven tomorrow—
Where marching feet bring sorrow, sorrow, sorrow,
I bide for her, as bides a lover only,
I sighed for her, as sighs a lover lonely,
I cried for her, mid blood and mud and smother.
Then came the day, the ending of the war.
I hurried home. She ran to me once more.
We met—and never knew each other !

1945



The strangest affliction it is, like a gadfly :
You brush it away, but it comes back madly,
You want to go out, but it's too late to do it,
It's hot humid air, you cannot breathe through it :
You stifle and gasp in the storm-atmospheric,
It pays you no heed, like a woman hysteric ;
It comes in the night, it's a night-time ranger,
And what can one do with it, grief, the stranger ?

1945

Translated by Walter C. May

These two poems are reproduced from *Ilya Erenburg. Stikhi 1938-1958 (Sovetskii pisatel', Moskva, 1959)*. There are two textual differences from the version reproduced in the *Oxford Book of Russian Verse*, from which our translator worked. In the poem 'May 9, 1945' the *Oxford Book* has *den' nastal* (came the day), instead of *chas nastal* (came the hour) of the text above. In the second poem, the last line in the *Oxford Book* begins *A chto s nim delat' . . .* (And what can one do with it . . .) as compared with *A kak uteshit' . . .* (And how to assuage it . . .) above.—Editor.



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SPECIAL LANGUAGE SCHOOLS IN THE SOVIET UNION

Glyn John

Mr. John is a language teacher who attended an international seminar on the teaching of Russian held in Moscow last summer.

IN England, the inability of pupils to speak, read and write languages which they have studied for five years or more is causing concern. Arguments rage between bodies, like the London University Institute of Education, that favour an oral approach to language teaching, and some teachers who claim that grammar, translation and parsing are essential.

In recent years, similar concern has been expressed in Russia about the performance of Soviet students. Finally, in 1961, the Soviet Government called on Ministers of Education and the various departments responsible for schools and higher institutes to examine and overhaul the teaching of languages. One of the many results of this decree was the increase in the number of special language schools.

Schools with a leaning towards a particular subject have existed for a number of years in the Soviet Union. Some of them—the Moscow Music School and the Circus School for example—have a world-wide reputation. Until recently, the language schools have been less well-known. As the need for a sound knowledge of at least one foreign language is becoming more obvious, however, they are now creating greater interest.

Children enter them at seven—the usual age for beginning school in Russia—and leave at fifteen or seventeen, depending on the type of occupation they have decided to follow. They begin studying a foreign language at eight, and four years later history and geography are taught through that language as well as the literature of the country concerned. Six lessons per week, each lasting between forty and fifty-five minutes (according to the age of the pupils), are allowed for language teaching. Classes normally containing thirty to thirty-five children are divided into groups of seven to ten for five of these lessons. For the sixth, which usually takes place on a Saturday morning, the class comes together to sing foreign songs and act foreign plays. A foreign atmosphere, too, is reproduced in the special schools. Most notices and instructions are printed in the language taught. Children correspond with schools abroad. In one 'French' school visited, correspondence was not limited simply to an exchange of letters and photographs—the children also compared records of their performances in athletics with those of their French counterparts, postal chess matches were played, and girls tried out French recipes they had received. In 'English' schools, posters and postcards show scenes of Britain and the USA. English calendars hang in some of the classrooms. In a 'Hindi' school (yes, Hindi !) children produce plays in Indian national dress.

Since English is the second language in the Soviet Union, this subject is the speciality of most of these schools. In Moscow alone there are at least thirty English language schools, and the number is being increased by converting some existing secondary schools into special ones. Most of the rest are French or German, although there are a few devoted to Chinese and Hindi. It is expected too that some Spanish schools will be established in the near future.

Apart from an oral test to discover whether or not a child has any serious speech defect, there are no entrance examinations. Selection depends solely on how near the children live to the school—those from the immediate vicinity go there automatically, unless a parent does not wish his son or daughter to

learn the language concerned, in which case the child will normally go to the next nearest. While it is difficult to generalise about their size, most ten-year schools contain 600-700 pupils. Out of an intake of sixty, it is expected that about fifteen begin work on leaving, while the remainder go on to higher educational establishments, but not necessarily to study languages. I asked one seventeen-year-old at an 'English' school if he intended carrying on with this language at university. 'No, I speak it fluently already and I've made a serious study of England and English literature. I'll tackle engineering at university. The two should prove an interesting combination.' I must add that he was not boasting and has probably made the correct decision.

In all the schools visited the teaching methods were lively, realistic and with a strong emphasis on oral work. In the newer schools, particularly in those staffed by recent graduates from the Moscow Foreign Languages Institute, there is a tendency to avoid grammatical terminology and translation and to introduce and practise instead new constructions and vocabulary in the language taught. This, it is felt, causes the children to respond automatically in the foreign language, while too much emphasis on grammar is thought to leave them with no alternative but to think of the grammatical rules and with their help translate Russian thoughts into a poor approximation to the foreign language.

The following accounts of lessons observed might give a clearer indication of the teaching methods.

Class of eight-year-olds after four months English

Teacher holds up pictures showing children taking part in various sports—skating, playing football, swimming. Her object is to obtain the answer 'Yes,

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I can' or 'No, I can't' to the questions 'Can you skate?', 'Can you play football?', etc. All the following was in English.

Teacher (pointing to picture of girl skating and boy playing football) : He can play football. She can skate. (Points to boy and girl in class) Volodya can play football. Nina can't. (Points to pictures of Eskimo skating and African boy swimming) He can skate. He can't. (Points to Volodya) Can he skate ? Obtains answer from one child.

After more examples of this kind, the whole group of ten is able to answer 'Yes, he/she can.' 'No he/she can't.'

She then leaves this topic for the moment and practises some constructions which have already been learnt : 'Sasha, ask Vanya to give you something.'

Sasha : Give me a ruler.

Vanya (passing one to him) : Take it.

Sasha : Thank you.

Vanya : Not at all.

More dialogue of this kind with 'bring,' 'carry'.

She then broke off completely and asked them all to stand. There followed three minutes of physical exercises, the instructions once again given in English. Next she reverted to 'can/can't'.

Teacher : Sasha can play football, but I (points to herself) can't. Can Nina play football ?

Pupil : No, she can't.

Teacher : I can skate, I can swim, but I can't play football. Anna, can you play football ?

Anna : No, I can't.

This type of question and answer continued until I/he/she/can/can't swim/play football/skate were firmly established.

She then held up a large picture showing a puppy eating a bone. Underneath were a few sentences in large print. 'Spot is a dog', etc. The whole group read out these sentences in chorus.

Finally, the children were given a picture each—a rose, apple, hat, dog, cat, etc.

Teacher : Katya is having a birthday party. Come out one by one and give her a present.

Child : Take my apple (hat, cat, etc.).

Katya : Oh ! Thank you.

Child : Not at all.

The approach varies, of course, according to the age of the pupils. A student in Volgograd described ruefully what happened on teaching practice when she asked a class of fifteen-year-olds to pretend they were in a post office !

Class of eleven-year-olds after three years English

First of all the monitor for the day told how many children were present and how many absent, and wrote the date on the board.

Then followed question-and-answer work on seasons : 'When do we wear overcoats and hats? When do we ski and skate? What do we do in summer? How do we know when spring has arrived?', etc.

After that, the teacher related an anecdote (train stops at station ; man gives boy sixpence and asks him to buy him a cake and get one for himself with the change ; boy returns eating cake ; hands man threepence. 'Sorry, there was only one left').

There was oral question-and-answer work on this, followed by children coming to the board to write down questions and other children's answers to them.

Finally the pupils gave a brief written account.

Class of seventeen-year-olds after nine years English

The teacher was leading a discussion on Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge*. The whole discussion was carried out in English. All the pupils spoke fluently, and showed that they had a wide vocabulary which they could use accurately and automatically.

During the past academic year the special schools have been equipped with miniature language laboratories. These enable pupils to compare their responses with those on a master tape controlled by the teacher, who can concentrate on individual children by tuning in to each one in turn. An attempt is being made to build up libraries of tapes covering pronunciation, intonation, and comprehension passages designed to give intensive practice on the full range of constructions existing in the language under study.

The teaching in these schools is good. In one school I saw the daughter of an official at the Indian Embassy. I was also told (by an American) that the children of some US officials attend some of these schools. If this is true it is a good sign.

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The Editor's Notebook

KONSTANTIN STANISLAVSKY was a distinguished theatrical producer, a great actor and an inspired teacher, who has had a greater influence on the theory and practice of the theatre than probably any other actor or producer. His books have been translated into dozens of languages, and published in many countries. Actors all over the world have been influenced in one way or another by his ideas. It has been gratifying to note how widely the centenary of his birth has been observed in this country in the press and on television, and with an exhibition. It has been interesting, too, to note the efforts made to disentangle his reputation, and that of his system, from its American debasement.

Conditions in London do not lend themselves to a full application of Stanislavsky's ideas; but it would be wrong to think that Stanislavsky has had no effect on the British theatre. To anyone who remembers the stir and excitement created by Mr. David Magarshack's translations when they appeared—and the heated discussions and debates that spread far beyond theatrical circles—this is obvious. It is not so obvious, however, to those who have made their acquaintance with Stanislavsky via the 'Method'.

There are many misconceptions about Stanislavsky's system. Articles that have appeared here have bristled with them. This is due, in part, to the fact that many people only know Stanislavsky from those of his books that have been translated, and are not acquainted with the rest of his writings or the library of books by his associates and pupils describing how he worked. There has been a tendency, too, to narrow attention to the Moscow Art Theatre that he founded with Nemirovich-Danchenko, and where, of course, his influence is most strongly felt and preserved. Stanislavsky himself was proud to be an honorary member of the Maly Theatre, on whose traditions he drew deeply and with which he worked closely for many years. His influence is strong there, and in the theatres founded or directed by his pupils and collaborators, the Pushkin Theatre in Leningrad, and the Mayakovsky (founded by Meyerhold), the Vakhtangov (named after its founder), and the Stanislavsky (directed by Yanshin) in Moscow.

Not all of Stanislavsky's pupils saw eye to eye with him in every detail, particularly in regard to style of production. Accounts of their relations that dwell on the differences, however, overlook what they held in common. This point was made very forcefully by one of his pupils, Reuben Simonov, the present director of the Vakhtangov Theatre, in a lengthy centenary article in *Sovetskaya kul'tura*. 'Two of Stanislavsky's pupils', he wrote, 'remained faithful to their teacher to the end of their days—Vakhtangov and Meyerhold were the great master's reward for his real, objective love for all superior talent that arose in the theatre from time to time of itself and not according to the canons laid down.'

'Three roads were opened before us: those of Stanislavsky, Vakhtangov and Meyerhold. Each of them held its own joys, soaring heights, disappointments, pitfalls and frustrations; but without them art is impossible. Remove failures from art and it becomes an insipid, boring exercise of no use to anyone. Only tragic defeat gives a true realisation of the joy of victory.'

'During the last days of his life Vakhtangov dreamed of a play to be produced by Stanislavsky, Meyerhold and himself. Stanislavsky, and Meyerhold

too, warmly supported Vakhtangov's idea. This mutual aspiration of great artists indicates the one correct path to us. It lies not in a breakdown into separate independent roads, but in a fusing, a synthesis of all the best given to us by the three outstanding producers of our time: Stanislavsky, Vakhtangov and Meyerhold.'

Stanislavsky's system pervades the whole Soviet theatre, opera and ballet. His pupils are to be found in all its main theatres. As Simonov writes, Stanislavsky 'created a school by which the inner and external techniques of the actor are cultivated. He taught us directors how to work with actors, to know how to give them assistance in the process of creating a role without disturbing the organic birth of the character. Stanislavsky taught us to tip our hats when walking on to the stage.'



Stanislavsky's system became the dominant trend in the Soviet theatre, however, at a time when it, like other aspects of Soviet life and art, came under the baleful influence of the 'cult of the personality' of Stalin. 'The formality, pomposity and varnishing imposed by the administrative æsthetics of the period of the cult of the personality', recently wrote the talented Leningrad producer Georgi Tovstonogov (who was a welcome tourist visitor to Britain last summer), 'the blacklist of forbidden subjects, and much else, froze creative art up and at times crippled it. During this period the great art of the past was declared, in essence, a museum piece. It could only be restored. This archivist's attitude to the classics led to a breaking of the links between classical works and contemporary life; and the classics began to die on the stage. Of course, fine plays were produced in this period, too, but more often in spite of than thanks to the æsthetics of those years. Innovation in general was a rather dangerous venture, since everything that existed was declared to be perfect and any attempt whatever to change it was looked upon as dissatisfaction with what had been affirmed as the standard of beauty.' Not a few observers, seeing the negative features of the Soviet stage, came to wonder if these were not—in part—a result of Stanislavsky. It has been a task of his pupils—not least in observing his centenary—to clear away the dross and restate his system.

ENCYCLOPÆDIC VOLUMES

ONE of the things that has been much needed for some years has been a reliable reference book on the USSR. During the last couple of years three volumes have appeared aimed at fulfilling the gap: *Encyclopædia of Russia*, edited by S. Utechin (Everyman's Reference Library—J. M. Dent & Sons, London; 700pp., 30/-); *Encyclopædia of Russia and the Soviet Union*, edited by M. T. Florinsky (McGraw Hill Book Co. Inc., New York; 624pp., £9); and *Information USSR*, edited by Robert Maxwell (Pergamon Press, Oxford; 982pp., £10).

The first two are encyclopædias, with hundreds of individual entries listed alphabetically; the third is a handbook with long sections and articles on different aspects of the Soviet Union, supplemented by statistical tables and indexes. As such it is complementary to the other volumes rather than a straight rival.

Anyone wanting quickly looked-up potted biographies, notes on geographical places, towns, etc., is advised to use either of the two encyclopædias (of the

two I prefer Florinsky's); but for information on the Soviet economy, constitution, history, institutions and surveys of the arts the questing reader, the student seeking material for an essay or study or the teacher after up-to-date facts to supplement his probably out-of-date geography textbook is advised to go to *Information USSR*. It is to be hoped that it will quickly find its way on to the reference shelves of all public libraries and into as many school libraries as can afford the price.



Information USSR is basically a translation of volume 50 of the *Large Soviet Encyclopædia*, brought up to date at the time of publication; that is to say it gives a Soviet view of the USSR. Many readers, therefore, will find statements and views and descriptions that contradict what they have read about the USSR in most of the books they will find in their libraries, and much that they will find in either of the two encyclopædias mentioned above. It has a built-in Soviet viewpoint, of which most users will be aware as soon as they start to use it. The editor has provided the volume with comprehensive indexes which are very helpful for locating facts buried in the general articles. He has also provided a reading list, which is less commendable and can be faulted on two points: (a) it includes many books for which the user needs the main body of the text as an antidote; and (b) it omits a number of books (because they are too favourable to the USSR?) that it should have included—e.g. Andrew Rothstein's *History of the USSR*, Miss Deana Levin's *Soviet Education*, and the excellent book on Soviet psychology edited by Brian Simon.

Information USSR was given the full cold-war treatment on publication. Editors set their Kremlinologists to reviewing it. The volume was combed for quotations with which to smear it in the eyes of both the prejudiced and the well-meaning but ill-informed. Everything from headlines down was slanted to give the impression that the volume was not a trustworthy source of facts.

Exactly the opposite was the case with the two encyclopædias. Here the Kremlinologists praised to the skies volumes which are, on the whole, not so reliable and certainly no less coloured (rather more, indeed) by built-in bias, though of an opposite character.

The Everyman volume (unfortunately the cheapest and the one most apt to be purchased as a home reference work) is particularly coloured by anti-Soviet prejudice. One expects, when one consults an encyclopædia, to find objective information, succinctly and authoritatively presented. (Even the most famous encyclopædias sometimes fail in this, particularly—it must be said—in respect of the USSR; and it is always as well when consulting a major entry to note who the author is in order to take his opinions into account.) *Encyclopædia of Russia* must be faulted severely for the extent to which it presents opinion—and sometimes even prejudice—as fact; as a result it is below the standard one has always associated with the handy little Everyman's Encyclopædia. The reader who uses either it or the McGraw Hill publication for information on socio-political and historical questions is strongly advised to consult *Information USSR* on the same point if he has the possibility.

Surveys and Reviews

MR. MAISKY REMEMBERS

D. N. Pritt

WHEN Ivan Mikhailovich Maisky, Ambassador of the USSR from 1932 to 1943, came to London to take up his post, he found that the King was absent from London, and he had to wait for a while before he could present his credentials and start his work. He took the opportunity of these idle days to revisit many of the places in London where he had spent practically all the time from 1912 to 1917 as a refugee from Tsarism. This was the 'journey into the past' that gives the title to his new book of reminiscences and he has built round it a fascinating and educative book.* He devotes much of the book to a series of sketches of the personalities whom he met—mostly Russian, but a few British—interwoven with stories of his own experiences and accounts of events of the period, half a century ago. With the personal sketches he makes an ingenious use of appendices to give the post-October-revolution histories of the lives of those Russians who survived ; the book is the only one I can recall in which the appendices are as important as the main texts!

Among the historical figures of whom we get a real understanding are Chicherin, Litvinov (especially interesting, and rightly highly valued by Maisky), Theodore Rothstein, Alexandra Kollontai, Peter Kropotkin, George Lansbury and Ramsay Macdonald.

The part of the book containing these sketches is fascinating reading, I think, for most generations—it certainly is for me, who met Kropotkin for just a moment, and saw quite a lot of Litvinov and Rothstein. And it is more than good reading and history in easy doses, for it gives invaluable lessons in politics, enabling us to understand that no advance to socialism can be held—or even made—except on a basis of Marxist understanding.

There is more in the book—good accounts of the Fifth Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party held in London in 1907, with the help of a loan from Joseph Fels; of the International Socialist Congress at Copenhagen in 1910, and of the Trades Union Congress which met at Manchester in 1913.

There is, too, a great deal of light on the peculiarities of the British people, which are just as important for us to understand—if we want to co-operate intelligently with our foreign friends—as they are for others (Maisky almost makes me understand the leaders of the Labour Party).

With all this material, the book is in no sense a miscellany or a hotch-potch ; it holds together very well, and makes us long to see in English the other books that are to come from him, *Who Helped Hitler?*, dealing with the Anglo-Russian negotiations of 1939, and *Spanish Notebook*, the story of that particular form of illicit and reactionary intervention in the affairs of a progressive state that was ironically called 'non-intervention' in the Spanish war of 1936-9.

The book is lightly and pleasantly written, and well translated.

**Journey into the Past*. I. M. Maisky. (Hutchinson. 288pp. 30/-.)

CONFUSION FROM MR. KENNAN

W. P. Coates

THE subject of Soviet foreign policy during the period covered by Mr. George Kennan's new book *Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin**—really a series of lectures—will occupy the attention of historians for many years to come. However, here he has done, as in his earlier articles and lectures, far more to confuse than to enlighten.

In the early pages he asserts that the aim of foreign intervention in Russia, 1918-22, was to restore the eastern front and not to destroy the Soviet Government. Has he forgotten that military experts at the time were convinced that the restoration of the eastern front was quite impossible? Further, has he forgotten that in 1921 the British Government issued a White Paper (Cmd. 1240) in which it was clearly stated that the aim of that intervention was to overthrow the Soviet Government? The British Government ought to know, because the Prime Minister of the day (Lloyd George) said that Great Britain had spent more on helping the 'Whites' than all the other Allied governments put together.

Kennan states, correctly, that the 'Provisional Government' was accorded recognition immediately by the Allied diplomats, but they refused recognition to the Soviet Government. Why? Because the latter was a socialist government.

Kennan writes :

'The first official act of the Soviet Government, performed on the very day of the revolution, was the issuance of the Decree of Peace. In this document the All-Russian Congress of Soviets (of whose claim to be the sovereign governing body of Russia the Allied governments, incidentally, had had no prior notification) proposed to all belligerent peoples and their governments the immediate opening of negotiations for what was called "a just and democratic peace." This, it was said, meant a peace without annexations or indemnities. . . .'

What happened? Kennan continues :

'None of the warring governments paid any formal attention to the Decree on Peace. It was not addressed directly to them. It emanated from a body of whose authority and legitimacy they had no clear evidence. . . .'

Our comment is that the Allied governments had more evidence of the stability of the Soviet Government than they had of the solidity of the Provisional Government when they recognised the latter.

Kennan, as we understand him, approved of the policy of the Allied governments towards the Soviet proposal, but on a later page he writes : 'I think it an endless pity that it [the war] did not cease in November 1917, when the Bolsheviki called for its termination. . . .' What on earth are we to make of that? He approves the Allied governments' decision not to recognise the Soviet Government. He approves the Allied governments' decision to ignore the Soviet's peace offer, but he admits that it would have been a good thing for the world had the contents of that offer been acted on.

Throughout the lectures Kennan's listeners must have asked themselves : 'Was Mr. Kennan sitting in the centre of the Kremlin during the period covered in those lectures and had he a number of agents bringing him information from all quarters ?' Because he speaks as though he knew everything that occurred in that place.

As a matter of fact, the lectures are chock-full of inaccuracies and half-truths. Kennan's statements regarding the Anglo-French-British negotiations of 1939 and the Katyn massacre of Polish officers are the opposite of the truth. Kennan is a bad historian. He would, we fear, have made a worse man of action.

* *Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin*. George F. Kennan. (Hutchinson. 411pp. 40/-.)

When after the triumphs in Norway, Denmark, Holland, Luxemburg, Belgium and France Hitler attacked the USSR on June 22, 1941, he (Kennan) would have said to the Russians (we quote) :

‘If you are interested in receiving our material and military aid, we will give it to you precisely in the measure we find suitable and for precisely as long as this suits our purposes. . . .’

That gem of absurdity is too rich to be commented on.

However, Mr. Kennan has learned a little wisdom, since in his famous article in the July 1947 issue of *Foreign Affairs* he stated :

‘. . . . The US has it in its power to increase enormously the strain under which Soviet policy must operate, to force upon the Kremlin a far greater degree of moderation and circumspection than it has had to observe in recent years, and in this way to promote tendencies which must eventually find their outlet in either the break-up or the gradual mellowing of Soviet power.’

That policy was tried by the USA and her Allies and failed.

In his final lecture Kennan discusses the ‘danger’ from the USSR, and continues :

‘How could outright warfare serve to protect against this danger? What could be the specific objective of regular military operations undertaken to this end? To unseat the Soviet Government? But how? By occupying *all* of Russia? I think military authorities would agree that this is not technically feasible even if it were worth one’s while to make the staggering effort. And what would you expect to put in place of the Soviet Government? Do you have a ready substitute? Remember that one of the reasons for the failure of the intervention in 1918 and 1919 was that there was no unity among the Russian opponents of Bolshevism, and not even any unity of opinion among the western governments as to which of these opponents one would wish to see succeed. Would it be better today?’

On the following page Kennan continues :

‘You cannot logically inflict on another people the horrors of nuclear destruction in the name of what you believe to be its salvation, and expect it to share your enthusiasm for the exercise. Even if you were sure that the overwhelming majority of another people wished in theory to be freed by external intervention from a given situation of political subservience (and in the case of Russia I am not at all satisfied that this would be the case today), it would still be senseless to attempt to free it from the limited internal embarrassment of an unpopular régime (which still permits, after all, the privilege of life in the physical sense) by subjecting it to the far more fearful destruction and hardships of modern war.’

We can assure Mr. Kennan that he is historically correct. No foreign invader of Russian territory (the ‘Teutonic Knights’, the Tartars, Napoleon, President Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau and finally Hitler) has ever succeeded in convincing the Russian people that he was making war on them for their own good.

INTELLIGENT APPEAL

J. S. Spink

GEORGE PLEKHANOV (1856-1918) was a writer of high intellectual temper and a master of polemical prose ; we have had to wait too long for a collected edition of his works. His major writings (*The Role of the Individual in History* ; *The Development of the Monist View of History* ; *Fundamental Problems of Marxism*) have been issued at various times by Lawrence and Wishart, but it has not been easy to get an idea of the full scope of his activities. The collected edition now being produced by the same firm will make clear that his position was a dominant one.

The best piece in the first volume, now available,* is *The Development of the*

*G. Plekhanov. *Selected Philosophical Works, Vol. I.* (Moscow, Izdatelstvo literatury na inostranykh yazykakh ; London, Lawrence and Wishart. 898pp. 10/6).

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LAWRENCE & WISHART

Monist View of History, here presented in A. Rothstein's extremely lucid translation, already known to many English readers. It reads with perfect freshness. It is a model of rigorous discussion concerning method in the historical and social sciences. Moreover, it is witty.

It is not a history of ideas, so there is no point in questioning whether certain formulas it uses adequately express the whole of a given writer's work (that of Helvétius, for example) ; it is concerned with a certain view of history and justifiably selects what is relevant to its purpose. From this point of view, all that it says concerning the eighteenth century, and Rousseau in particular, is still perfectly sound. One could state its theme in an abstract manner, thus : 'Of the various relations between man in society, which is the one upon which all the others are, or have been up to now at any rate, directly or indirectly based ?' But Plekhanov's manner of developing it is not abstract. 'Truth,' he writes (p. 703), 'is always concrete.' Whether it is a question of public opinion as against political institutions, political institutions as against property rights, property rights as against the organisation of production, 'what is' as against 'what ought to be,' he keeps a rapid debate going. Of the clash of opinions he makes a fruitful method of inquiry. He ferrets out with great gusto the 'idealistic' elements of the work of various pompous and self-deceptive opponents. He is accused of a lack of idealism ? True, the object of scientific inquiry is 'what is' and not 'what ought to be', but a man can seek the well-being of his fellow men and of his country in spite of that! He has no idea of freedom ? True, a man is a worm when he is ignorant, but knowledge makes a god of him. Knowledge of the truth is the measure of a man's freedom. *Tantum possumus, quantum scimus* (p. 741). It is sobering to watch Plekhanov reduce some simple doctrines of liberty to a mere trust in random choice. Our own Premium Bond Ernie, the freest of random choosers, would have provided him with a good example.

Plekhanov always appeals to the intelligence. His own culture is wide and he expects his reader to have the wherewithal to follow him. His translators (A. Rothstein and R. Dixon, who has been responsible for various polemical pieces) have followed him competently. There is a factual account of Plekhanov's work by V. Fomina. There is also a good index.

SOVIET LEGAL PRINCIPLES

Lord Chorley

A BOOK recently received here, *Fundamentals of Soviet Law*,* is a commendable attempt to set out in reasonably short compass (some 500 pages) the basic principles and rules of Soviet law. It consists of twelve chapters, the first introductory, the others dealing with the constitution, administrative law, civil law, labour law, land law, collective farm law, finance law, family law, criminal law, criminal procedure, and civil procedure. Almost all of these subjects might be found in an English book of the same kind, the noteworthy exception of course being collective farm law. We, on the other hand, would include commercial, perhaps with some maritime law, and succession, subjects which are not touched upon here. The general impression is the one gained

* *Fundamentals of Soviet Law*. Edited by P. S. Romashkin. (FLPH, Moscow. 517pp. 10/6. Available from Central Books.)

by visits to courts in the USSR, viz. that the majority of their problems are the same as ours.

And indeed in civil law, which is concerned with the rights and obligations of citizens themselves, the methods of solving the problems are far from dissimilar. In other fields where the problems are much the same, as in criminal law, the solutions are very different ; thus the Soviet Procurator, though he performs most of the functions of our Attorney General and Director of Public Prosecutions in relation to the criminal law, has a much more important, extensive and constructive role than have they. Moreover, the court procedure is very different ; though this would appear much less strange to a continental lawyer.

I do not think that an English lawyer wishing to get a good general idea of Soviet law, and of its similarities with and differences from English law, could do better than peruse this book. He would have to remember that Soviet legal writers are accustomed to mixing in with their analysis a good deal of economic sociological and indeed legal ideology, which, even if he accepted it, he would find rather bizarre in an English textbook. When, however, they get down to the working rules of the system these Soviet lawyers are just as capable of setting out the law with clarity and balance as are the best English authors.

Space does not permit me to attempt a detailed discussion even of one of the chapters. But I think that many English lawyers would agree that it has been of inestimable advantage to the Soviet legislators to be able to take a fresh look at the law in the light of the requirements of a modern society, instead of being clutched so much in the dead hand of the past as are we in this country—and to legislate accordingly. Yet it is undoubtedly the case that the situation in which modern man finds himself in this technological and commercial age requires a broadly similar handling, whatever the ideological context ; and the sometimes wearisome insistence on ‘ socialist legality ’ in this volume cannot obscure this fact. On the other hand, in the new society there is scope for varying the rules and for elasticity of administration which we cannot but envy.

This broad proposition could be exemplified from several chapters of this book. Thus many of the principles of contract law arise by logical development from the concept of agreement, and yet in the mid-twentieth century the position of older children, literate and often with stable economic interests in society, is very different, whether we consider it in an English or a Soviet milieu, from what it was anywhere a century or more ago—an out-of-date position which we still maintain. This book shows how much more intelligently the problem has been handled in the USSR.

On the other hand, in a number of respects, the USSR is a new world, and has had to build up a legal system to meet its requirements with but little assistance from classical jurisprudence. The chapters on collective farm law, labour law, finance law, and to a considerable extent land law (unfortunately the chapter on this subject is somewhat vague, and the rules relating to the holding and transfer of the quite considerable individual rights which can exist in land are not particularised), therefore contain a great deal which will be as strange as it is fascinating to an English lawyer, though it must be said that even in some of these chapters the reader will find himself moving in not unfamiliar surroundings.

GORKY—FALSE AND TRUE

Maxim Gorky: Romantic Realist and Conservative Revolutionary. Richard Hare. (OUP. 156pp. 21/-.)

Childhood. Maxim Gorky, with an introduction by C. P. Snow. (OUP. 330pp. 7/6.)

MR. HARE is advertised as a master of Russian-language sources. Yet his book does not one thing to bring home to us with some concreteness what Gorky's writing is like in Russian. Many pages are spent on the stories, with a dumbfounding lack of critical selectivity. How can an author who has weighed his subject, and decided on the proportions of treatment it demands, spend five pages summarising the plots of 'Chelkash', 'The Affair of the Clasps', and 'The Orlovs', with only the most perfunctory indication of what it is that distinguishes the fiercely condensed tragedy of 'The Orlovs' from those rather aimless and crudely realised first stories? Surely the minimum of interpretation would have entailed saying that the essence of 'The Orlovs', as of so much of Gorky's significant work, is the confusion caused in a violent and backward man when the demands of civilised conscience begin to impinge on him.

But no such ideas guide Mr. Hare's hurried plunge through Gorky's *œuvre*. With cool parasitism he batters on Gorky by way of paraphrase and summary, and moves on to his chosen task—an *exposé* of Gorky as a good man fallen among Bolsheviks.

Hare's argument here is typified by what he makes of Gorky's relations with Lenin. We learn that Lenin was, towards Gorky, abusive, terrorising, obstructive, scheming, cynical and philistine. Fortunately the true story can be found in Gorky's own memoir of Lenin, Alexander Kaun's *Maxim Gorky and his Russia* (1932), and the article 'Lenin and Gorky' by Anatoli Volkov in *Soviet Literature*, 1959, No. 4. Lenin cared for Gorky like a father. He knew and respected his value; he also knew how sentimental impulses could make Gorky swither like a weathercock, and Lenin valued literature so much that he did not want to lose from the ranks of the revolution a supreme story-teller and supreme exemplar of the Russian working people.

Lenin's practical intelligence with regard to literature is shown by the fact that both Tolstoy and Lenin were enthusiastic about Gorky's plans for *The Artamonovs*, but it was Lenin who realised that it could not be written till after the revolution—which would

supply its natural conclusion. Yet Hare calls Lenin a philistine!

Time and again Hare is seriously misleading, no doubt on the assumption that his readers will have little previous knowledge of the material. This is what is known as writing an authoritative account of the subject. Fortunately more readers will pick up the new World's Classics edition of a Gorky masterpiece, *Childhood*. C. P. Snow's introduction is one of the most open-minded essays I have read on a Soviet literary subject, and the following sentences contain more literary criticism of Gorky than the whole of Hare's book: 'Here he is writing without any suspicion of a distorting lens, without forcing an effect, with a truth as fresh and absolute as Tolstoy's. This is how it was, one thinks as one reads: this is how it was and not otherwise.'

DAVID CRAIG.

CHARACTER CONTRASTS

The Northern Palmyra Affair. Harrison E. Salisbury. (Hutchinson. 310pp. 21/-.)

Colleagues. Vasily Aksenov. (Putnam. 240pp. illus. 16/-.)

TWO very different books about Leningrad. The first is a journalist's attempt to build a novel out of the events that took place in Leningrad in 1947 and 1948, when many people, as we now know, were unjustly imprisoned or sent into exile. The book seems to me a quite unscrupulous attempt to build political capital out of a tragic post-war situation, when after the tremendous effort to achieve victory men were exhausted and suspicious and ready to fly at each other's throats.

I do not know the true facts of the case. Neither, I suspect, does Mr. Harrison Salisbury of the *New York Times*, but I think most of his readers will appreciate that the Dr. No-like figures in Moscow who, out of fear of Leningrad's supremacy in the arts and sciences, will the moral and physical destruction of the 'Palmyra of the North' are drawn from contemporary American mythology rather than from any character he observed in the USSR.

"Very clever", the Deputy said, his voice smooth as silk over the Moscow line. "Very clever, comrade Galpert. . . . Have you been able to determine the principal characters in the conspiracy?"

The conspiracy in question is the organisation of a funeral for a famous sculptress, whom the Leningrad party organisation had exiled to Tashkent to save itself and satisfy Moscow's blood-lust. Moscow, how-

ever, is not satisfied for long. By an irony of fate all who loved or hated the great artist are obliged to attend the funeral. The novel closes with a general round-up made by Moscow's ever-watchful secret police.

Even the admiration Harrison Salisbury avows for the heroism shown by the people of Leningrad rings false when it is mixed with nerve-titillating descriptions of corpse-robbing in the morgue and insinuations that the city's sufferings during the siege were desired by the Kremlin, which 'blocked the plans to organise the people for a siege' and 'forced the city to send out of the flaming circle special arms for Moscow'.

I could forgive Harrison Salisbury quite a lot, for he has written well about the USSR on occasions, and even in this book the satire of those who so harshly criticised Zoshchenko is justified. But how can anyone who knows the delight Soviet people take in poetry imagine that the lines 'make me your slave, beat me, humiliate me . . .' would have won any Soviet poet a 'special fame' among the young people who had fought the war? Unfortunately this distortion of an actual poem is typical of the whole book.

Vasily Akzenov's *Colleagues* is about three young men who have just finished medical school in Leningrad. None of the three is a particularly good or bad character, but one chooses the hard way in taking up a doctor's job in a remote village, while the other two, convinced they will develop into mere 'dumb animals' in the provinces, go for the more tempting prospect of becoming ship's doctors on the high seas. As the novel proceeds, one sees who gets the more exciting life.

One of the most interesting things about Akzenov is the subtlety of his character-drawing and his appreciation of the way young Soviet people actually think. They hate 'big words', 'verbiage', and the fear of the pretentious and false sometimes drives them into an apparently selfish attitude, which they manage to shed only when faced with a crisis. Towards the end of the novel, when his friend's life is in danger, the gloomy and irritable Max, who had chosen the easier path out of a frustrated desire for heroism and self-sacrifice, reflects that it is a mistake to fear big words, for people who 'look at things with open eyes can make those big words clean'.

This is not, as the dust-jacket claims, Akzenov's second novel. It was written before *The Starry Ticket*, and it is better constructed. The translation is also better. One could argue with Alec Brown about some of the liberties he has taken with the original. The insertion of a phrase such as 'the great labour concentration camps of the north' seems quite unnecessary to me and implies a different attitude to the subject on the part of the author. There are also many inaccuracies—'We are in a spot' (*bot tak gorim*) is rendered as 'We are

up to our gills in fever', and 'invite you to a meeting and treat you as if you were a pickpocket' becomes quite wrongly 'invite you to a gathering and won't even stand you a drink'. But the prose is imaginative and readable, and the translator has made a reasonable choice from all the various colloquial forms of speech that English has to offer. With so many pitfalls in his path, this alone is an achievement.

There is no real comparison between these two books. I happened to read them when I was being kept busy answering a lot of questions from English people about the USSR. 'What is the Soviet student's attitude towards taking up a job?' 'What does he do if he's sent somewhere he doesn't want to go?' Akzenov's answers to these questions give the complex human background in a way one can rarely do in conversation.

ROBERT DAGLISH.

DREAMY BIOGRAPHY

Ulanova: *Her Childhood and Schooldays*. M. Sizova, trs. Marie Rambert. (A. & C. Black. 176pp. Illus. 15/-.)

I WANTED to write not a review but a sonnet, because a sonnet would reflect best the intensely poetic quality of Madame Sizova's biography. But sonnets take time, more time than prose.

Two things—no, three—are remarkable about the book. Although a biography of childhood and schooldays, it is written in the form of a tale for children, with childishly apt illustrations by Igor Yermolayev. Second, it examines in a profound way the early artistic development of the great Soviet ballerina, not hesitating to criticise obliquely but pointedly the rigid approach of old-fashioned teachers. 'The classical ballet consists of a series of conventional positions and movements which have to be executed by the dancer with ease and virtuosity, without the slightest hint of difficulty. And that is all, it seemed.' Even today many teachers and dancers consider that this really is all. But it is not all. How and why it is not all is the point of the book, and the secret of Ulanova's greatness.

The book's third remarkable quality is its translation by Dame Marie Rambert. Notoriously, translators get less credit than they deserve. In a sense, the better they do their work the less they are noticed. But here the assurance of the style, its command of idiom and penetration into meaning all suggest that the link between Russian and English has been fashioned by someone who knows the places and life about which she writes, besides being able to command both languages. If it is not too fanciful, it suggests that the translator knows, too, her readership. Perhaps Granny Rambert's pen was encouraged by thoughts of bedside

stories for her grandchildren, since this is very much what the tale could be.

For this reason in particular I wish that the young Galia could be shown occasionally to be naughty, as she must have been. The author, like many biographers, presents her subject as a sort of paragon, human certainly, timid and shy, but also too good to be true. Hence the book acquires a dream-like quality. The famous ballet school in Leningrad, the glorious theatre, the snow and the warm, peaceful countryside—all these are as real as Galia, yet they appear like a memory of childhood, hazy, sketchy pictures on the mind; poetry, not prose. Infused with music it is poetry to be enjoyed, like ballet.

PETER BRINSON.

POPULAR TRIO

Three Soviet Plays. N. Pogodin, A. Korneichuk, A. Arbuzov. (FLPH. 247pp. Illus. 5/-. Available from Central Books.)

HERE are three Soviet plays, very popular among Russian audiences, by three well-known playwrights. I enjoyed reading them: they are, I felt, workmanlike and well-made as plays, all different, and all essentially Russian. They cannot but give a deeper insight as to what has happened, and is happening, in the USSR.

The first, 'Kremlin Chimes', by Nikolai Pogodin, is from a trilogy about Lenin. It is set in the 1920s, and one is reminded most vividly of the utter, terrible and apparently hopeless chaos of those early days. Millions of soldiers, who had fought for years, often practically unarmed, against the well-armed Germans, flooding back to what was left of their towns, villages and homes; a ruthless civil war against the armies of Generals Denikin, Wrangel and Kolchak, all equipped by the alarmed West, as well as the war of actual intervention, when the armed forces of fourteen countries joined in to crush the revolution. How the Soviet Union survived is surely one of the miracles of history, wrought by Lenin and those he inspired to work with him. In Pogodin's play we catch and re-live a fragment of those fateful years.

The second play, 'Platon Krechet', by Alexander Korneichuk, is set in the thirties. The hero, Platon, is a first-class surgeon; and again, through the people round him, the author gives us a vivid picture of some of those working in medicine during that period—their problems, ambitions, jealousies, achievements. For me it had strength, tenderness and humour.

The third, 'It Happened in Irkutsk', by Alexei Arbuzov, was—the book jacket tells us—the hit of the 1960-1 season. In a foreword the author writes: 'I have long been disturbed by the thought that we attach far too little significance to love, the kind of love that ennobles and uplifts. Yet I believe

that a person who loves shapes, to some extent, the life and moulds the character of his beloved. That is what my play is about.' And his play is the work of a man of the theatre—he has acted as well as directed plays; and he has chosen a somewhat unusual form for a modern play about human relationships, using a chorus that both speaks and is spoken to by his characters. Again insight and strength, tenderness and pity, illuminating something of the great happiness and suffering that deep intimate relationships can cause.

All three plays, I feel, show the great differences as well as the similarities of our two systems. I write this (not, I would like to say, as a critic, but as one who has tried to write plays and knows how difficult it is) at a time of appallingly dangerous world crisis. It makes it all the more insane that we are on the brink of mutual destruction when we have so much to give each other, so much to learn from each other, from our mistakes as well as from our achievements.

MILES MALLESON.

CAUGHT BY THE CAMERA

Soviet Art Photography. (FLPH. 149 plates. 42/-. Available from Central Books.)

HERE is an excellent book of photographs, all the better for containing a variety of styles. There are a few 'dated' pictures, the kind that Soviet photographers went for rather heavily in days gone by, but for the most part this is a book of superb modern photographs. I am glad not to find extreme examples such as those in favour in some quarters today, where grain and other glaring faults are deliberately used to create some allegedly mystical effects which invariably fail to register on my mind. Perhaps I am getting old-fashioned. No, here is photography at its best, setting out to use the camera as an artistic tool, moulding light and shape and design into things of beauty.

The colour prints are not glaring and brash, but show a fine sense of discretion. Most are subtle in tone; some are really beautiful. I particularly liked No. 86, a magnificent atmospheric picture of water and sky, with the ship most cleverly placed in relation to the breaking wave and the sky; 89 is a superb study in greens and blues and shining metal, most original; another study in green is 118, a striking but simple piece of composition; 74 and 77 are lovely pictures, but not particularly original.

It is the monochrome pictures that appeal to me more than the colour. There are some excellent examples of the clever use of angles, not just for the sake of using them, but to very good effect—11, 18 and 25 are good examples. Industry is well represented, with some powerful and dramatic

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pictures in considerable variety. 24 and 30 make full use of curves and good skies, aided by the skilful use of strong filters. The placing of the two figures in 29 is particularly effective. 37 and 40 are two excellent examples of the proper use of angles combined with strong lighting. 34, 36 and 39, and the colour shots 32 and 35, we have seen before, or rather something like them; they are not so original, but well done nevertheless. 42 has a wonderful feeling of motion and atmosphere, while 44, a colour shot, is quite original. In 33 and 64 one can fairly feel the biting cold; both are outstandingly good pictures of extremely difficult subjects. In 81, a fine atmospheric picture, it is nice to recognise our own River Thames.

Various pictures of children are good, but I do not detect anything very original in the agricultural scenes—such a vast theme in the Soviet Union—except for 66, which is full of movement and atmosphere, and boldly trimmed to wit. The various portraits are good but not outstanding, and the same might be said of the scenery. There are some fine snow scenes, where good use has been made of *contre jour* lighting. The snow-storm in Moscow (8) is most realistic, but perhaps one of the best winter scenes is 84, well named 'Winter Fairy-tale', and truly Japanese in style and feeling.

I found the pictures of animals rather disappointing, except for the reindeer (64), and the colour picture of the lion (138). In theatre and music I liked the feeling of action in 110, cleverly caught at exactly the right moment, and the design and movement so well portrayed in 111. The two ballet scenes 106 and 107 are on well-executed, if familiar, themes. The pictures of musicians are disappointing.

For the feeling of a stormy day at sea it would be hard to beat 76, very like a Mortimer but, one imagines, accomplished with much less manipulation than was usual with that superb artist. The picture of the ice-breaker *Lenin* is a fine example of marine photography taken on a doubtful day. Finally, let me come back to the first picture, a superb example of simplicity and economy in space, of a very human subject.

Altogether, a book that one would be proud to have on one's bookshelves, a book to be picked up and looked at again and again for a long time to come.

J. ALLAN CASH.

GEORGIAN FLASHBACKS

A Modern History of Georgia. D. M. Lang. (Weidenfeld & Nicolson. 298pp. Illus. 36/-.)

THE author of this work, Dr. David Lang, is reader in Caucasian studies in the University of London, and has already established his reputation as a Georgian scholar by his *Lives and Legends of the*

Georgian Saints and *The Last Years of the Georgian Monarchy*. He has also prepared a catalogue of the Georgian and other Caucasian books in the British Museum, with over 3,000 entries, to be published shortly.

In this book about twenty pages are devoted to the history of Georgia up to 1800, 150 pages to the nineteenth century under the Tsarist government, thirty pages to the brief period of independence, forty pages to Soviet Georgia, and a short concluding chapter on 'Georgia in our time'. The bulk of the work is therefore on the history of Tsarist Georgia, and it tends to keep close to the chronological statement of the main political events in a rather old-fashioned 'kings, queens and battles' style. As 'a modern history' it is 'modern' only in the sense that modern British history has tended to be a history of nineteenth-century Britain.

There is some brief discussion of the nature of Georgian society, and of the distinguishing characteristics of the Georgian people. The text and the forty illustrations fall just short, however, of conveying to the reader that sensation of knowing the Georgian people that one is entitled to expect from an author who obviously has a great love for them, has studied them for years and recently visited the country.

In his bibliographical notes he pays tribute to 'the vividly written and finely illustrated work by W. E. D. Allen, *A History of the Georgian People*', which was published in 1932. Dr. Lang's book is a useful supplement to this earlier work by Allen in that it carries the story up to the present. It is a pity that the bibliography contains so few references to modern Soviet works on Georgia. There are many available in Russian which would be useful to many of his readers who would like to fill in the gaps in the very short section on Soviet Georgia.

M. HOOKHAM.

SCYTHIAN SURVEY

The Scythians. Tamara Talbot Rice. (Thames & Hudson. 255pp. Illus. 25/-.)

DESPITE the fact that the Scythians were well known to the Greeks from the days of Herodotus, and that there is an abundance of archaeological material, there are still a large number of unsolved problems connected with them, not least of which is their relation to the following peoples and cultures, and thus their role in the creation of Russia. Mrs. Rice's book is not, however, the place to go for any detailed discussion of such questions—a fairly up-to-date summary of which will be found in Mongait's *Archaeology in the USSR*.

Mrs. Rice is primarily interested in an account of the Scythian way of life and art.

The art, with its mixture of nomad, Near-East and Greek elements, has a high fascination; indeed, its components are highly complex, and any discussion of them raises a large number of controversial issues. Mrs. Rice tends to range boldly in seeking analogies and influences. Thus, in dealing with the antler motive she cites palæolithic art and the Hittites, then Hunan in China of the first millennium B.C., the shamans of Tibet and Siberia, and folk custom in Celtic Ireland, medieval England and Scandinavia. This has illustrative interest, but does not help much to fix the origins or significance of the Scythian motive. Indeed, she casts her net wide in every way, treating the nomads of the Altai, including those buried at Pazyryk, as 'kindred Scyths', though in fact we cannot say much more of such folk than that they, like the Scyths, were of the Early Iron Age. Objects of the animal style such as those in the Altai barrows are found in very widespread areas and cannot be used to argue for ethnic identities or kinships among the groups who employ the same general stylistic methods—though the spreading of the style must represent cultural and other contacts.

However, Mrs. Rice's book remains a fascinating account of a number of important archæological finds, with an interesting discussion of the art-problems thus raised—however the inter-relations will be finally settled.

JACK LINDSAY.

PIONEER OF REFLEXES

Selected Physiological and Psychological Works. I. Sechenov. (FLPH. 607pp. 21/-.
Available from Central Books.)

SECHENOV'S is one of the illustrious names among those often quoted as personifying 'the progressive, democratic, materialist tradition of Russian science'. He is generally regarded as the father of Russian physiology, but is, like most classical scientists, more honoured by homage than study. There is no doubt of the imprint of his work and personality on the later development of Russian physiology. Pavlov, for example, repeatedly acknowledged his influence. Moreover, this influence extended well beyond the boundaries of the natural sciences. His faith in science, refutation of dualism and insistence on the necessity of studying mental processes by scientific—'physiological'—methods place him indisputably with the founders of the radical, revolutionary wing of Russian scientists and writers.

None of Sechenov's works seems to have been hitherto available in English. It is perhaps appropriate that this volume should be published now, almost exactly 100 years after the appearance of his most celebrated essay, 'The Reflexes of the Brain', which is

included with seven others in this collection. Sechenov had been brooding over the main ideas of this work for some years, while visiting and working in the laboratories of the greatest physiologists of his age—Ludwig, Helmholtz, Du Bois-Reymond, Bunsen and Claude Bernard. On the basis of his own simple experiments on the reflexes of frogs, and the general body of knowledge, he develops the thesis that voluntary movement and thinking are, despite their greater complexity, as reflex in origin as involuntary movement. It is understandable that ideas of this kind would generate much suspicion and open hostility. Sechenov found it difficult to steer the book past various censorship obstacles. The title, for example, had to be changed and several passages omitted.

It is remarkable how well this essay has weathered the ensuing tempestuous century. Readers need have no fear of facing dull, archaic 'historical' material. The presentation is fresh, lively and even humorous. The style is quite modern, and this is in no small measure due to the excellence of translation and editing. The late Academician Koshtoyants has provided for the book an interesting biographical introduction, and a useful bibliographical appendix has been compiled by S. Gellerstein.

The editors have no doubt chosen the best material for this collection. Nevertheless, one regrets that all or most of Sechenov's 'Autobiographical Notes' were not included. These were written towards the end of his life and are of absorbing interest. They explain the origin and formation of many of his views and bring home to readers the author's engaging personality. May one hope for their early separate publication?

A very minor criticism: phonetics notwithstanding, the adjective *psikhichesky* is 'mental' and not 'psychical'.

L. CROME.

BOOKS FOR PHYSICISTS

Theoretical Physics. A. S. Kompaneyets. (FLPH. 592pp. 37/6. Available from Central Books.)

Handbook of Elementary Physics. N. Koshkin and M. Shirkevich. (FLPH. 214pp. 7/6. Available from Central Books.)

THE high standard of many Russian textbooks on physics frequently makes even high-priced English translations attractive. Kompaneyets's *Theoretical Physics*, published in English in the Soviet Union, has the advantage of a low price. It should be useful to final honours or early post-graduate students of physics or mathematics who are studying the topics covered, as well as to the 'engineer-physicists' and specialists in fields associated with physics for whom it is intended.

The book is divided into four parts—

Mechanics, Electrodynamics, Quantum Mechanics, and Statistical Physics. The emphasis is on fundamental ideas and their relevance to physical phenomena, and long or complicated calculations are avoided. However, the treatment of these topics necessarily requires mathematics, and the reader should be familiar with the differential and integral calculus (of functions of severable variables) and vector algebra.

Part I deals briefly with the mechanics required in the subsequent parts, including Lagrange's equations and action principles.

Maxwell's equations are established early in Part II on the basis of the elementary laws of electromagnetism. The subsequent discussion is based on these equations with point charges regarded as the sources of the electromagnetic field. This part concludes with two fairly long sections on the special theory of relativity and relativistic dynamics.

The treatment of quantum mechanics in Part III is unusual in that the quantisation of the electromagnetic field is introduced immediately after the harmonic oscillator. Radiation is treated only quantum mechanically. This is more satisfactory than the usual textbook approach and not difficult. Nothing more complicated than first order perturbation theory is used in this part, and most of the applications are to atomic physics. The last section, on the relativistic wave equation, contains a brief description of the Gell-Mann classification of elementary particles.

The sections of Part IV on statistical physics form two groups. In the first group the distribution functions for quantum and classical particles are obtained and applied to a variety of problems. The second group of sections contains a discussion of thermodynamics and its applications on the basis of Gibbs's statistics.

Problems, with answers or sketch solutions, appear at the end of most sections. Sometimes standard results, such as the conditions on the electromagnetic field vectors at the boundary between two media, are presented in this way.

Both the selection and presentation of material in this book are interesting, and consistent with the author's aim of appealing to 'the reader who is interested in the physics of elementary processes'. Although the book is not intended for reference a fuller index would have been valuable.

The production is pleasant, but two criticisms must be made. There are rather a lot of misprints and other minor errors, and the translation is not always fluent, although usually the meaning is clear. Neither of these defects should give trouble to the attentive reader, and the book can be recommended as an introduction to theoretical physics.

According to the preface, the *Handbook of Elementary Physics* 'covers all the main topics of elementary physics and contains information most frequently required in industry and agriculture'. As might be

expected in a book of this scope, which would fit into a very modest-sized pocket, the text is often over-simplified. However, the main value lies in the range of tables, which contain, for example, the approximate speed of an 'elevator in a house', the specific heat of water at various temperatures, transition temperatures for some superconductors and a list of elementary particles. The date of publication and, in some cases, an indication of the accuracy of the data would have been useful additions.

SHEILA BRENNER.

EXPLORING FOR PARASITES

Forewarned is Forearmed. P. Petrishcheva. (FLPH. 204pp. Illus. 4/-. Available from Central Books.)

THIS little book is an instructive popular account of the work of a distinguished parasitologist in the Soviet Union. The author explains the mechanism of parasitic diseases and sets the stage for an account of his lifetime researches by describing in simple, even colloquial, language the main characters in the play: turtles, lizards, monitors, mice, rats, hamsters—hosts to various blood-sucking insects and ticks which act as vectors of such parasitic diseases of man and domestic animal as typhus, brucellosis, leishmaniasis and encephalitis.

The author's investigations lead him to far lands—to the Siberian taiga, where diseases with natural foci occur in wild forest animals and can soon be transmitted to pioneer and expanding human settlements by ticks swarming from wild animals to domestic creatures and thence to man himself; to the remote Kara Kalu in Turkmenia, where the porcupine, one of earth's oldest mammals, is found to have a startling importance as an agent of disease. Porcupine burrows indeed are found to be the oldest natural foci of several human diseases in Central Asia. The author, his colleagues and local volunteer enthusiasts spent much time exploring these burrows and reaped a rich harvest of ticks, sandflies mosquitoes and fleas. Caves, old graves and underground shelters, in some cases abandoned by their mammalian dwellers but still harbouring disease-bearing and hungry ticks, were likewise investigated. These creatures have in fact been kept as long as seven years without food in the parent institute's laboratories near Moscow, and have still retained viable the causative agents of relapsing fever.

Not all of the animal lairs were entered or dug up, as the investigators were soon led to ingenious and less troublesome methods by watching a file of ants entering a badger's burrow and reappearing laden with the immature stages of sandflies and fleas. The

idea of trapping with live bait was soon developed; caged rodents were pushed into the burrow to be investigated, and withdrawn after a period by an attached cord, when any adhering blood-sucking ticks or insects were removed for further examination. Notwithstanding the danger of this work—the investigators themselves were always in constant risk of incurring the disease they were studying—its fascination and absorbing interest are conveyed in a lively manner. The excitements of discovery, the unravelling of complex life history relationships of parasite and hosts, and the ultimate goal, the devising of successful practical preventive measures, are all graphically described in a manner clearly designed to arouse interest in the younger reader.

C. A. COLLINGWOOD.

STUDENTS' CHEKHOVS . . .

Kashtanka. (60pp. 4/6.)

Uncle Vanya. (84pp. 5/6.)

Three Sisters. (119pp. 6/6.)

(All Bradda Books.)

WITH these compact unabridged editions of Chekhov, Bradda Books admirably continue to provide useful and inexpensive reading in the original for the growing number of students of Russian.

All three books are edited and provided with vocabulary by J. M. C. Davidson, of the City of London School, and the text is stressed throughout—in the case of *The Sisters* and *Vanya* by Miss Volossevich, of the Association of Teachers of Russian. Mr. Davidson has written introductions for two; Professor Hill of Cambridge for *Vanya*. The books are well produced, strongly made, well printed, and of handy size.

The subject matter of *Vanya* and *The Sisters* needs no introduction. *Kashtanka* is less well known; it concerns the adventures of a mongrel dog and his debut in a circus: a moving, humorous and beautifully told little tale.

It would have been useful if the audience for which the books were intended had been defined. With their unabridged texts they are certainly not material for beginners, and would probably be suitable for the final stage of a thorough school or adult education course. The value of *Kashtanka* and *Vanya* would have been considerably enhanced by such notes on difficult linguistic points as are supplied in *The Sisters*, which give useful information on upwards of 125 linguistic points, whereas no help is given in *Vanya* (which would certainly have as many) and *Kashtanka* (which has a number).

The vocabulary sections do not include 'the most basic words', and are in general adequate. In *Vanya*, however, Mr. Davidson has perhaps been too hard on his readers. As he says: 'The . . . vocabulary has been kept to a minimum by selecting only one basic root word out of a group and by

including only those compound verbs which have an unexpected meaning or form. . . . It can therefore be seen that many unknown words will be found under their roots and not in their full forms'. There are only twelve pages of vocabulary in *Vanya* as against thirty-one in *The Sisters*.

The Sisters can be warmly recommended to fairly advanced students of Russian. Introduction, notes and vocabulary are good.

J. MARTIN WEIR.

. . . AND PUSHKINS

A Pushkin Verse Reader. Ed. I. P. Foote. (Geo. Allen & Unwin. 244pp. 18/-.)

The Gipsies. (Bradda Books. 50pp. 6/-)

The Bronze Horseman. (Bradda Books. 38pp. 4/6.)

OF all the great universal poets, Pushkin is the least well-known in England. For far too long the merits of this immortal poet have remained concealed behind the barriers of a foreign language which few Europeans have bothered to learn.

Now, however, there are more and more students of Russian, who are coming face to face with this hidden treasure for the first time, who wonder at the revelation of such splendour and beauty, as did those who first gazed upon the revealed face of Tutankhamen.

In this verse reader not all the treasures are uncovered, but enough is laid bare to give the fortunate reader a true conception of the whole. A most difficult task faced the editor in selecting fifty of the best-known lyrics and a quintet of the longer poems from the hundreds which Pushkin wrote. Mr. Foote has chosen, with few exceptions, poems from each year of the poet's productive life, which show the development of style and power and cover an extensive range of subjects.

Perhaps, in the poems, 'Count Nulin' might have made way for 'Napoleon', whose character and influence were so keenly felt by Pushkin, or for his 'Madonna', and perhaps 'Autumn', which played a major part in his creative habits, and the lovely 'Nightingale', singing in the songs of the western Slavs, might have found a merited place.

The verses are accompanied by useful notes and explanatory matter and a vocabulary, which are of a great assistance to the student of nineteenth-century Russian verse. So also is the short biography, in so far that Pushkin's work was a close reflection of his life and times, and without a knowledge of these the reader's appreciation is limited. Once again pressure on space has necessitated a brief account, but surely the omission of the circumstances of his death, the court intrigues, the suffering, the chaos and the calamity which robbed Russia of her greatest poet and brought thousands flocking to his bedside, and the compression of his end into seven lines, is an understatement of the true stature of Pushkin.

This book will obviously be dipped into again and again, and deserves a proper binding, even if it costs the reader a guinea.

The little volume of *The Gipsies* is the third of Pushkin's poems to be presented in this series. It follows the pattern set by 'The Bronze Horseman' and 'Eugene Onegin', giving the student a critical survey of the poem and a vocabulary at the end. To *The Gipsies* are added notes on the text and a short biography of the poet. Here again the events leading to Pushkin's death are sketchily dealt with, and it is difficult to equate his letters and his poem 'God grant I never go insane' with the comment that at that time 'his creative work went on unimpaired'.

This is a useful little book, although the price, like the new type-face used in the text, is a little on the heavy side.

WALTER C. MAY.

PUSHKIN'S *Bronze Horseman* is a welcome addition to the Bradda series of Russian texts.

From an educational point of view it combines two qualities: it is in itself a great literary masterpiece; at the same time it is not too difficult for students who have reached the O level and are ready to study Russian literary works on the A level. It is an admirable intermediate text for pupils in schools who, after their O-level examination, have a few leisurely weeks before the end of the term.

The origin, plot and literary merits of the poem are explained by Professor Elizabeth Hill in her comprehensive and interesting introduction. Her statements on page eight should stimulate a keen student to pursue some of the themes which Pushkin combined in this stirring epic.

The helpful notes are a necessary supplement to the introduction. The vocabulary has been carefully selected and rendered into English. The legible print and adequate spacing of lines, two qualities which facilitate the reading of Russian texts, will be appreciated.

In my experience students have not only enthusiastically memorised parts of Pushkin's poem, but have realised the advantages of this handy little volume.

One might perhaps query the necessity of stress accents in a text of such regular poetic metre.

G. BALG.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Some of these will be reviewed in our next issue.

Dostoevsky : A Life. David Magarshak. (Secker & Warburg. 50/-.)

Dostoevsky : A Self-Portrait. Jessie Coulson. (OUP. 30/-.)

Nikolai Leskov : Selected Tales. Trs. David Magarshak. (Secker & Warburg. 21/-.)

Russian Short Stories. Ed. John Iwanik. (Harrap. 21/-.)

Russian Classics in Soviet Jackets. M. Friedberg. (Columbia UP. 38/-.)

Let the Blood of Man Not Flow. M. Stelmakh. (FLPH. 6/-.)

Tolstoy's 'War and Peace' : A Study. R. F. Christian. (OUP. 25/-.)

First Years of Revolution, 1918-21. Ilya Ehrenburg : Vol. II of 'Men, Years—Life'. (MacGibbon & Kee. 25/-.)

The Call of the Cosmos. K. Tsiolkovsky. (FLPH. Unpriced.)

Alexander Herzen. M. Malin. (Harvard UP. 55/-.)

Peter the Great, Emperor of All Russia. Ian Grey. (Hodder & Stoughton. 35/-.)

Tamburlaine the Conqueror. Hilda Hookham. (Hodder & Stoughton. 35/-.)

Genghis Khan. Ralph Fox (first published 1936). (Background Books. 10/6.)

A History of Russia. Bernard Pares. (University Paperbacks. 15/-.)

Art Treasures of the Hermitage. L. Voronikhina. (State Hermitage Publishing House. Unpriced.)

Holy Icons. Doris Hill. (E. Stanford. 8/6.)

Y. Yevtushenko : Selected Poems. (Penguin. 2/6.)

Song Out of Darkness. Taras Shevchenko. (Mitre Press. 16/-.)

Boris Pasternak. In the Interlude : Poems, 1945-60. (OUP. 6/-.)

Russian : A Beginner's Course. E. Hingley and T. J. Binyon. (Allen & Unwin. 25/-.)

Learn Russian Quickly. D. N. Callender. (MacGibbon & Kee. 21/-.)

The Gateway Russian Course. Book I. F. Seeley and H. Rapp. (Methuen. 21/-.)

Russian Syntax (A New Russian Grammar—Part 3). Anna H. Semeonoff. (Dent. 18/-.)

Russian Reader. Louis Segal. (Lund Humphries. 7/6.)

A Classified Russian Vocabulary. P. H. Collin. (Harrap. 12/6.)

Russian-English Dictionary. B. A. Lapidus and S. V. Shevtsova. (FLPH. 7/6.)

English-Russian Dictionary. S. Folomkina and H. Weiser. (FLPH. 7/6.)

Anglo-Russian Dictionary. Ed. V. D. Arakin. (Foreign Dictionaries Publishing House, Moscow. 17/6.)

Anglo-Russian Technical Dictionary. Ed. A. E. Chernukhin. (Foreign-Language Scientific and Technical Dictionaries, Moscow. 50/-.)

Russian-English Dictionary of Social Science Terms. (Butterworth. 95/-.)

Science Russian Course. Maximilian Fourman. (University Tutorial Press. 12/6.)

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